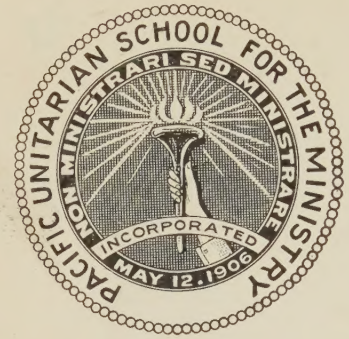
THE PASSING AND THE PERMANENT IN RELIGION

MINOT J. SAVAGE



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BY

MINOT JUDSON SAVAGE, D.D. (HARVARD)

AUTHOR OF "LIFE BEYOND DEATH," ETC.

"THE FOUNDATION OF GOD STANDETH SURE"

2 Tim. ii. : 19

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PREFACE

RELIGIONS die, while religion is universal, permanent and progressive: theologies change and pass, but so long as man thinks, he will think and theorise, though imperfectly, about the greatest of all themes: man has always speculated about the universe and, in later times, has studied it, and his theories about it always have been and always must be intimately associated with both his religion and his theology: man at first regarded himself as made suddenly by fiat power, but he has learned that he has evolved from lower forms of life, while his religions and his theologies have kept step with his own advance: bibles have been the natural expression of man's hopes, fears and aspirations at the different stages of his advance, not creating religion, but being created by it: gods have been the best ideals which man has been able to imagine, at different steps of his advance, of the one Eternal, of whose life all things are only the changing

and passing expression: saviours have taken shape in accord with man's thoughts of the evils from which he supposed he needed to be delivered, and all are entitled to that name who have helped to deliver the race from any of its evils, though this may not interfere with the supremacy of one: worship has taken shape according to man's changing theories of the powers he has thought of as being able to help or hurt him, and it is essentially admiration for that which man thinks of as above him, and so is the condition of all growth and progress: prayer is the universal instinct which leads man to try to get into helpful relations with the powers thought of as able to control his destiny, and since the conditions out of which it springs are permanent, it cannot pass away, though it must slough off its superstitions and become rational: the Church is the voluntary and natural organisation of men as religious beings, and it seeks the highest spiritual ends of which those who constitute it can dream: hells are the more or less horrible dreams which have haunted the imaginations of men as the outcome of evil in another life, and they have generally been crude and libellous parodies on the truth that in all worlds men reap what

they have sowed: heavens have taken shape in accordance with the same human fancy which has created its hells, and, in essence, they are the kernels of all the fair and good things which are to blossom and bear fruit for the good: men pass into the resurrection life the kind of beings which they have become here, and while there will be opportunity for moral advance, there will also be field for the activity and development of all the great powers and faculties and tastes which pertain to the essential nature of man in this life:— to set forth, develop, and establish, so far as possible, the positions above suggested, is that which is attempted in this book.

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The Passing and the Permanent in Religion

I

RELIGIONS AND RELIGION

THERE is a wide-spread impression abroad that religion may not be a permanent element in human nature. Many are telling us that it is a phase of thought, of feeling, of life, peculiar to the early and comparatively uncultivated stages of man's career; that it is something which the civilised man will progressively outgrow and at last leave behind. Many philosophers, many scientific men, have held this position, and have done what they could to disseminate it among their readers. And there is a popular feeling in the community that in some way the churches, which are regarded as standing at least for religion, are gradually losing their hold upon the

people. And some are wondering as to whether by and by they may not all become empty, and human life be simply secular.

There are persons who rejoice over this prophecy. They are not evil-minded people : among them are some of the noblest that you will find in the world. They believe in all sincerity that religion is the last remnant of a once universal superstition that held the minds of men in slavery, and that the subjection to religious ideas is only tyranny exercised over the human mind and heart by the shapes which the imagination has projected against the background of the Unknown.

On the other hand, there are large numbers of people who are troubled over the possible decay of religion. They are afraid of science, afraid of philosophical speculation, afraid of criticism, afraid of asking too many questions concerning the foundations of things in religion, lest the great reason for its existence shall be seen to be no adequate reason, only a persuasion that is to pass away.

I do not think we need be specially troubled over this problem. We ought to be able to look at it dispassionately, because, if religion is only superstition, why then, of course, it ought to be outgrown. If religion be not di-

vine, it cannot be eternal ; and, surely, it is better for the world that it should know and face the truth of things.

If, on the other hand, religion be divine, if it be essential to the highest and noblest human life, why then criticism and question will only verify this fact by and by and make us surer of that which many of us regard as a grand and noble heritage, the grandest, the noblest conceivable.

I do not wonder, as I look down the ages of the past towards the beginning and see what has happened, that men get the impression that religion is not an eternal thing. A thousand religions have already died. They have dropped from the tree of human life like leaves scattered by the winds in November. Away down towards the beginning, each tribe out of the many had its own religion, the ideas of which — at any rate the theories of which — have proved to be only temporary, something to be outgrown as intelligence has advanced. Religion after religion which troubled the ancient Hebrew, as we read the record of his history in the Old Testament, has ceased to exist. The religions of Ammon, of Amalek, of Moab, of Philistia, of a hundred others, have passed away. There

were many religions in the Euphrates Valley before Babylon became a city, which have all vanished. The great religions of Babylon itself are to us only names. We spell out a fragment here and there of some inscription on a brick or a cylinder, and try to resurrect the forms of the gods that have passed even from the imaginations of the memory of man. Where are to-day the gods of Memphis and Thebes, those who dominated that mighty civilisation on the banks of the Nile for so many hundreds of years? They are only words to be interpreted by the curious and the learned. Where are the religions of Greece and Rome, the mighty gods who used to sit above the clouds on Olympus and shake the earth with their tread as they came down to visit the children of men? Where are the gods that used to drive in their chariots across the sky or ride the foaming waves of the sea or rule over the inhabitants of the underworld? They are part of a curious story which we are fascinated by as we read the record of the past. But they no longer exist as realities for human thought or as in any practical way touching human life. The religion of the Druids is something to be guessed at as we look at the dolmens and the rows of stones which they

have set up, while we wonder precisely what they may have meant and what they were for. So Odin and Thor and the gods of our Norse forefathers are now only names in their Sagas, or in the traditions, the stories that have degenerated into folk-lore, and which pleased us as children,—or as grown-up people, if we keep the sympathies of our childhood.

There are, indeed, survivals of these in names, in customs, in habits, in states of feeling, just as there are survivals of all the past out of which we have developed. Our seven-day week, for example, runs back at least to the Accadians, older than Babylon; and the names of some of these days still remind us of the divinities of our forefathers of the North.

But these religions, and hundreds of others, have passed away. Of course, those who believe that Christianity is the one revealed religion, and that all the others are the natural products of the human mind, find sufficient reason for making Christianity an exception to the rest of these. But let us note some of the things which have happened to Christianity itself, so that we may see that it is not so very strange that the students, the philosophers, the scientists, should wonder whether it is to live.

Christianity once dominated Europe. Its

political power overshadowed empires and kingdoms. It was able to set up and overturn thrones. It held in its hands the destinies of peoples. It could bring a nation by its anathema to its knees. Where is this power? Since the days of the Renaissance it has gradually waned and dwindled away. There is no nation in Europe or on the face of the earth that as a nation to-day stands in awe of the Church. Even Spain, which is the most subject of them all, dares now and then to assert itself as against the decrees of the Vatican. Education, political action, many of the interests of men, are wrenched from the grasp of ecclesiastical power; and the people stand up at last free.

Then, again, the whole intellectual realm used to be dominated by the Church. Philosophy and science and art were all only provinces in the Church's universal domain. One after another they have revolted. To-day art goes its own way, asking no permission of any power, following its own ideals. Education has asserted its independence. Philosophers do not any longer ask whether the pope is to agree with their systems when they have completed their work. They follow what they believe to be true. Science at last is free.

About three hundred years ago Bruno was burned in Rome for daring to utter his opinions. To-day no man asks for liberty to express his beliefs on any subject whatsoever. All these things are taken out of the hands of ecclesiastical authority, of the official religion ; and men are free.

Then what a change has come, through the progress of science, over the way in which men look at the government of the world ! Kepler, who was born in the sixteenth century, believed, even after he had discovered the three great laws of planetary motion, that the planets were ruled and guided in their courses through the heavens by deputy angels whose business it was to superintend their affairs. He knew of no power except this delegated divine power by which to account for the motion of the heavenly bodies. When Newton discovered the law of gravity, demonstrated it to be true, the Church rose in alarm, and said that he was taking the universe out of the hands of God and putting it into the keeping of a law.

Not a great many years ago an eclipse was a divine and special sign sent with some religious meaning to men. You remember that in the Old Testament the rainbow was the pledge and promise of God that he would not send

another flood upon the earth. The whole domain of nature used to be looked upon as the scene of the divine interference, with special peculiar activity at every turn. It was supposed that God, for the sake of reading the world a religious lesson, would make the sun stand still in the heavens, would make the shadow go back on the dial of a king, would move a star from its orbit and send it wandering through the sky to direct the attention of men to some particular spot over which it should stand. God was the one who, in answer to prayer, sent rain ; He blighted the harvest as a token of His displeasure with the people.

Science has changed all this ; and now there is no one who has any question that the universe, in every department, is governed in accordance with universal and unchanging law. There are those who think that this is a step towards taking religion out of the minds, the beliefs, the convictions of man.

One of the finest of English essayists, who died within a few years, has a chapter devoted to this thought. He thinks that just as fast and as far as we discover that the universe is governed in accordance with laws, and not by a system of arbitrary interferences, so far religion is dying and science is taking its place.

There is another change going on. We dare now to study and criticise church history. We trace the origin and growth of religions. We criticise the books which used to be supposed to be above all question. We examine the very foundation stones on which religious ideas and theories have been supposed to rest.

Now all these changes — and this is the only point I have in mind — go to make the general impression that religion is losing its universal sway over the intellect and the heart and the life of the world; that we are tending to become more and more secular; that we are being emancipated from the rule of the invisible powers in the sky and are coming to manage our own affairs.

I wish to note now two things which can be used as indicating either that religion is dying or that simply a change is going on in its development.

President J. G. Schurman, of Cornell University, has called our attention to the fact that all religions pass through three stages of growth. First, the emphasis is placed upon the cult, the ceremony, the sacrifices, the ritual. Those are important. The gods are not supposed to care much how people believe or how

they behave. So long as they bring the sacrifices and go through the ceremony with exact punctiliousness, all is well and the gods are satisfied. By and by humanity reaches the next stage in religious development. The cult still remains, perhaps, the ceremony, the ritual; but people pay less attention to it. The emphasis is not there any longer. The principal thing comes to be the belief, the creed.

It was only a few years ago that the emphasis of the religious life was placed on the creed. It was what men believed which turned the scale as they were being weighed in the divine balances. Now, President Schurman tells us, we are outgrowing that phase of religious development. People keep their creeds on record in their books, their manuals; but they no longer feel bound by them. They are coming at last to say that the only essential thing in religion is the spiritual attitude, how we stand as related to the life of God.

In one way it may be said that this indicates that religion in the old sense is dying. The ceremonial, the temples, the worship, the creeds, being no longer of great importance, it comes to be merely a matter of how one feels and thinks. And one can feel and think without any religious institutions at all. But these

facts may be interpreted to mean that, as the world advances and becomes more and more civilised and developed, religion comes to be more a matter of the heart and the life,—comes to be what it ought to be.

Take as an illustration a side glance at government. Government is not supposed to be better or stronger on account of larger armies and more numerous police, more judges and courts and jails. When people outgrow the need of an army, when no longer compelled to have a police force, when courts of justice find no more business to employ them, and jails are not needed, government has not died : it merely means that the laws of conduct and of life have been transferred to the heart ; and the people are living out the most perfect ideals of government when the appearance of the government has passed away.

So the external forms, the creed and the ritual of religion, may pass, may conceivably cease to exist at all ; and it may mean only that the world has become more profoundly and more livingly religious than it has ever been in the past.

Then there is another way of looking at the story which science has to tell. It is said in some directions that it is gradually eliminating

God from His world. A famous French astronomer — Lalande — once said that he had swept the skies with his telescope and had found no trace of God. Very impressive and wise at first sight it may appear ; very silly and crude, if you examine the statement. Suppose a man should say that he had scanned the human form from one end to the other with a microscope, and found no trace of a thought or a mind. That would not be wise : it would simply be foolish. We do not discover God or mind in that way.

Another famous scientist has said that, in the study of the universe, God is an unnecessary hypothesis. True in one way. If I wish to explain, as a botanist, the development and growth of a tree, I do not need to think anything about God ; for I am only tracing and discovering laws. If, however, I wish to find the ultimate thing, that out of which the tree originally sprang, then I must ask a question that goes deeper than all that.

So science, rightly interpreted, instead of eliminating God from His world, may simply be giving us a new conception of the method of the divine government. Instead of its being a matter of arbitrary interference, we have learned to expect the divine faithfulness to be

manifested in methods and according to laws which never change.

We are coming to think of the forces of the universe, as they act in accordance with a certain changeless order, as being only the habits, the methods, of the divine working.

Science and its lesson may only teach us a higher and grander thought of the universe and of God, instead of being interpreted as a power which has gradually elbowed God out of His world.

I wish now to turn to the positive side. I have been giving you some of the reasons which perhaps excuse the superficial thought of the time and explain it. Let us turn now, and see if we can find some reasons for believing that religion is the central, essential, eternal thing in human life.

Mr. George J. Romanes, the famous scientist, the friend of all the leaders of scientific thought and life in England, has recently died. Some years ago he published a book called *A Candid Examination of Theism.* It was published anonymously. He wished to find out whether his theory could be successfully attacked and refuted, and therefore let it stand on its own merits; so it did not go out in connection with his name. In it he took a

pronounced position as a scientific atheist. He said there was no need of God to scientifically explain the universe. He had in preparation at the time of his death another book, which was to have been called "A Candid Examination of Religion." A friend of his has published a little volume called *Thoughts on Religion*, being merely hints as to what this book was to have been if he had lived to complete it. This editor is a Church canon, and has probably given an ecclesiastical colour to his work in some places.

What I wish to call your attention to is that he had completely reversed his attitude, and, as a scientist, had come to take the position that religion is one of the central and eternal things in life. One point I will suggest to you, which he uses as a scientific argument. He says that religion may be regarded as one of the fundamental instincts of the world. And just as any animal instinct anywhere is justified by the fact that it is a development of the life of the race of beings that it characterises, called out by its environment, fixed under the law of heredity, and so a necessary part of the order of things, so, he says, religion may be regarded. It is universal; it reaches back to the very beginning of the human race. It is one

of the instincts of humanity, ineradicable, created by the nature of things, called out by man's environment. And though there may be certain individuals in whom it may not have developed, and though it may need education and training to bring it to its best, this is only what you will find in regard to any instinct in an animal or a bird. There are cases where it is weak or almost non-existent; and if you place a bird or an animal in a new environment, where there is no use for the faculty or instinctive power with which you are dealing, it will be held in abeyance for the time. But this does not militate against the fact that the instinct is an instinct, and so is a part of the nature of things. This is a very strong scientific argument for the perpetuity of religious thought and feeling and life.

I wish now to mention another name, and hint to you another scientific attitude. Mr. John Fiske, of Cambridge, a personal friend and disciple of Herbert Spencer, is one of the most notable scientific men of the modern world. In a little book called *Through Nature to God* he develops what he believes to be a new argument, and yet one which he believes cannot be set aside. He says that Herbert Spencer defines life as "the contin-

uous adjustment of inner relations to outer relations." Anything that is alive is being acted upon by its environment and is responding to this action. A tree, for example, played on by the air, the sun, the rains,—all the things that surround it,—responds to this appeal and grows, puts forth leaf and bud and flower. There is a constant series of actions and reactions going on between every living thing and its surroundings. A dead thing, on the other hand, is acted upon by the environment, and a series of changes may be set up in it, just as the process of decay goes on in the tree after it has been cut down; but there is no reaction that we call life, readjustment, on the part of the dead thing as related to its environment.

Now Fiske calls attention to the fact that, wherever there is action and reaction between the living thing and its environment, it has always been that the living thing has responded to something real outside that has touched it and called out the change. There is not a case in the whole history of life on the earth, dating back millions of years, where the living thing has responded to an unreality. Now man from the very beginning has been responding to the supposed reality of God and

of a spiritual environment, a spiritual universe surrounding us and acting upon us; and Fiske tells us that, if in the course of evolution there has at this point suddenly come a change and reversal, so that man responds to an unreality, to what does not exist, it is something absolutely new in the history of the universe, and puts all our science and all our knowledge to intellectual confusion.

Here, then, is scientific demonstration, or something very near it, that the universe contains some reality that has called out the religious thoughts and feelings and activities of man.

I venture to say that years ago, before I knew anything about these teachings of either Romanes or Fiske, I put forward and developed an idea which seems to me, though in another way, to include both of theirs and to be something that is intellectually inescapable. The universe stands related to us, I have said, as the die stands related to the coin that it stamps. If you find some mark on the coin, if you find it on every one of the coins, you feel perfectly certain that there is some reality in the die that stamps the coin, that accounts for that mark. It was not there for nothing: it did not simply happen.

This kind of argument is like what we accept in scientific matters everywhere. The lungs have been created progressively by the air. The eye has been progressively created by the light. The ear has been progressively created by sound. In saying these things I am using language in a popular sense and not with technical accuracy; but the idea conveyed is correct. In other words, the universe pressing upon us has developed us and created us what we are. So wherever you find any universal or permanently characteristic quality in human nature, or any other nature for that matter, you may feel perfectly certain that there is something in the universe that is real, that corresponds to it, that called it out, that made it.

You find man, then, universally a religious being. You find him everywhere believing that he is fronted with an invisible universe. On any theory you choose to hold of this universe, it has made us what we are; and there must be—unless the universe is a lie—a reality corresponding to that which is universal and permanent and real in ourselves, because this universe has called these things into being, has made them what they are.

Now I must run rapidly, if I may trust to

your patience for it, over another line of thought, that will confirm this contention and make it, it seems to me, valid beyond all possibility of contradiction. Let us look at religion for a moment, and define it.

What is religion? Not yours, not mine, not Christianity, not Paganism of any kind; but what is religion? There are three or four constituent elements. First, it is man's thought, his theory concerning the relation which exists between himself and the Power that is not himself, the Power manifested in the universe around him: that is the first element of religion. Every thought, however, every theory of man that touches practical life, is accompanied by feeling; and so the second element of the religious life is the emotional. Man is a worshipping, hoping, fearing, trusting being as towards the Unseen; and the emotions will naturally follow after and be governed by the quality of the thought. If you have high and noble thoughts, high and noble feelings go along with them. If you have thoughts degraded and low, you will have feelings of fear and dread matching them.

Then, in the third place, man's theory, his thought and his feeling being permanent and universal, will naturally incarnate themselves,

express themselves, in outward institutions and actions; and so you have altars, temples, sacrifices, priesthoods, hymns, songs,—all the ritual of the world, all the prayers, all that makes up the external form of religion. And these are the natural and necessary expression of the thought and feeling of the time.

Then there is something beyond the thought and the emotion and the ritual. These all exist for the sake of what? What is it that man is trying to do in his religious life? He is trying to get into right relations with God: with the gods, if he is a polytheist; with God, if he is a monotheist. So from the very beginning of human history man has been trying to find God and get into right relations with Him; and this is what religion has always and everywhere meant.

Whatever man's theory about his gods or his God may have been, or about himself, he has felt the certain conviction that the secret of his life depended on his getting into right relations with this infinite and eternal Power; and so this is what man has been trying to do from the beginning of the world.

If you study the lowest fetich worship and others after it up to the highest form of Christianity, you will find that everywhere man

has been thinking about God and having certain emotions concerning Him, and has been expressing these facts and emotions in the external life, and all these for the purpose of finding God and getting into right or helpful relations with Him. That is what man has been seeking for. So, to put it in another way, you may say that religion is man's eternal search for the secret of life.

And now if you go on,—if you call it going; if you progress,—if it is really progress,—and become an agnostic, you do not escape this relation. If you say, I do not know anything about the universe, that does not touch the question that the universe is still your father, has produced you, and that it is the most vital thing in the world that you understand the laws of the universe, and get into right relations with it.

If you, as you think, progress still farther, and become a positive atheist, a materialist, still you do not escape this relation. The universe, if it is only dirt, is still your father, has created you; and it is the most important thing on earth that you understand its laws, and get into right relations with it.

So that, no matter what change of thought or feeling may come in the future, this

relation out of which religion springs is eternal, changeless, vital; on it life hinges. So in this world, or any other world, as long as the universe lasts, and as long as there is a man in it who can think and feel and express his thought and feeling and try to find out how to live, so long religion must remain.

It is not a practical question, then, as to whether religion is going to pass away. For you, for me, for all men, the one practical question is as to what relation we shall voluntarily sustain towards it. Shall we try to make it fine and high and noble? Shall we turn on the light from every quarter and try to see it as it is, or shall we shut it away in the dark, away from inspection and criticism or adequate comprehension? Shall we let it grow, as all healthy things do, towards the light, or shall we pervert it by fencing it away in shadow?

Religion will remain. What we shall do about it is the only practical question. Art is in the world. What is your relation towards it? You do not destroy it if you neglect it; you only make yourselves poorer. Science is in the world: you do not destroy it if you are ignorant of it; you simply impoverish your own being.

So all high and fine things that humanity has developed are in the world. You do not

destroy them because you fail to incorporate them into your own lives; you only make yourselves poor and weak because of your lack concerning these great things.

Now which are the essential things in the highest religious life that the world has been able to conceive? Three points I must suggest:

It does not matter much whether the ritual goes or not. Ritual is fine if it helps, if it is of service. It does not matter much, we say, about the creed. I think it matters a great deal, because in the long run we become what we believe. It makes all the difference in the world whether our ideas are accurate or not, because ultimately they touch and shape our methods of living.

But there are noble men — grand, sweet, true men — whose intellectual theories are all wrong, and whose ritual may not in the slightest degree appeal to us. And every true man who thinks will say, "Better be the grand and true and noble liver, with ideas all awry and with practices in the way of ritual that are inadequate and outworn, than to miss the life, and be ever so true in the theory and methods." These may or may not pass away. It does not matter. But we have come at last to believe

that at the centre of this universe — what we call God — is love. Love is the heart of the world. Love is the power that is gradually transforming and elevating humanity, and making it over into the image of the ideal.

The highest religion, then, will issue in the loving life. That is the first great thing.

The next is the truth,— the truth which leads us to a right conception of things, and which at last issues in the loving life.

And then the last great element of the highest religion which the world has yet developed is service. No man can be his best alone. No man can isolate himself from his fellows without losing more than that of which he robs his fellows.

The life of truth, the life of love, the life of service,— he who lives this life lives the highest life that religion as yet is able to conceive. We cannot dream of its outgrowing these ideals,— truth, love, service. This is what the religious aspirations of the world have aimed at as the one thing to be desired and striven for. And we feel perfectly certain that when it is attained the dream of the ages will have been realised.

This, then, is the permanent, the central, the eternal thing in religion.

II

THEOLOGIES AND THEOLOGY

IN the last chapter we noted the fact that the pathway of human history is strewn with fallen religions as our country roadsides are strewn in the autumn with fallen leaves. At the same time we saw the deeper fact that, while religions have died, religion has always survived. We need now to attend to a consideration which goes deeper still, as making clearer this thought and emphasising it.

In one sense religions have died. In another sense they have not. It depends upon our definition of religion. If we talk of the religion of ancient Egypt, that, so far as its forms, its doctrines, its worship are concerned, has passed away. So, if we consider the religions of ancient Greece or Rome, the religion of our forefathers of the North, they have passed away : they do not any longer exist among men. And yet, if we go a little deeper, and note that religion is not essentially

the thoughts which men cherish, the theories which they have elaborated about God and the universe and human nature, then we shall see that the essential thing in the religion has not died; only man's thinking about it has changed.

Religion is something deeper than thinking. It is feeling, it is love, it is a sense of dependence and trust, it is aspiration, it is hope, it is that uplift of the heart and nature which we call worship, it is the onlook towards and the pursuit of the ideal. These have never died since the world began. They have existed under every name, in every nation, under every outside form, and have been the heart and soul of the religious search of man.

Religion in this sense we might think of as like that wonderful stream which, Hebrew story tells us, followed the Israelites, after Moses had smitten the rock, throughout all their wanderings. Wherever they went, the stream went with them. It quenched their thirst, in it they could bathe and make themselves clean, in it they could see the reflection of the sun by day and the stars by night. It sang and crooned to them when they were weary, it fertilised its banks, it made the shrubs grow green, it entered into the beauty

and the perfume of the flowers. It was life and sweetness and comfort and rest to them through all those forty years.

That is the beautiful poem story which has come down to us from the past; and it may fitly symbolise the office and the eternal companionship of religion. In all ages, however poor or ignorant any tribe or people may have been, religion has whispered to them of an unseen origin, divine parenthood and childhood. It has been comfort and peace and hope. It has been the poetry of their existence.

The late Dean Everett of the Divinity School at Harvard, who has so recently passed away, has given a most beautiful description of this kind of religion of which I am speaking. He said: "Religion is the poetry of life believed in." Religion lifts us above the sordid, the commonplace, the humdrum, the grinding, depressing facts of life, and brings us into communion with the eternally young, the divinely beautiful.

Religion, then, in this profound sense of the word, has never died. It is only, after all, theology that has died; for the "theory of religion" is what we mean by the word "theology." It is the external framework of that which men have wrought out as the result of

their study; and the thought side of things is always wrong at the beginning, and of necessity is always growing and changing.

We have already seen, also, that certain scientific men of great eminence and power had given us such definitions of religion as seemed to warrant our supposing that science itself was back of religion as a demonstration of its reality and claim. Mr. Romanes, as we have seen, has told us that religion is an instinct, carrying with it as much authority as do any of the instincts which are implanted in the lower forms of life; and Mr. John Fiske has told us that, when we take the scientific definition of life, we find that we are acting and reacting in supposed relations with an unseen universe around us; and, if this unseen universe be not real, then from the beginning of the world men have been deluded and have responded to a something that does not exist; a behaviour which is unlike anything else which is to be found in the whole history of the world's development.

I reminded you also of the fact that, since the universe has created us, whatever is permanently in us must correspond to something permanent in the nature of things. But an instinct does not make mistakes. So some one

who thinks a little logically and carefully may object, and say: The animals, in following the guidance of their instinct, always go direct to the point: the bee never makes a mistake in the construction of his honeycomb. Animals, no matter what they are in search of, if they follow the instinctive leadings of their own nature, always go right. The carrier-pigeon, no matter how far he may be from home, when he lifts himself into the air and takes his bearings, always starts straight for his nest; and the birds that in the fall and spring gather as if to take counsel together, and then start on their long journey to the south and then back again to the north, do not make any mistakes. They follow this mysterious something which we call "instinct"; and they always go right.

So some one may object: If religion be an instinct, if it has been created by the universe in response to unseen but veritable realities, ought it not also to be as infallible as other instincts? Ought it not to guide us accurately? Ought there to be so much crudity, mistake, and jarring as there have always been in the history of the religion of the world? For one of the saddest things in all human history is the fact that the bitterest hatreds, the deepest and most impassable divisions, the most

bloodshed, have come from religious animosities and oppositions.

How can we understand this? It seems to me that it grows out of the necessary fact that man has something superadded to the instinct. The instinct may be true, vital, real, permanent; but, if man is to grow and become something grander than the animals with whom he shares a part of his nature, he must come up into the realm of independent thinking, into freedom, into self-originated activities. Reason is something above and beyond instinct; and, while it marks man as higher and grander than all the creatures that are beneath him, it at the same time is something that changes, progresses, learns year by year, and something that is perpetually liable to error. For it is only by making a thousand mistakes and correcting them that man learns the great lesson of how to live.

To illustrate what I mean in its practical application, suppose the birds, the homing birds, besides having the instinct to seek the place which their ancestors have sought for countless generations, and from whom they have inherited this instinctive tendency to seek,—instead of doing that, they should have the gift of reason bestowed upon them; should

meet in council and discuss the incidents of the last journey, the dangers they met with, the difficulties, the storms, and should wonder if there were not some better way. Do you not see how this higher faculty of reason would add an element of uncertainty, a confusion, a chance for discussion and difference of opinion; and we should have presented to us over again in this curious fashion all the phenomena of man's attempt to find his way, and of his mistakes in the attempt?

The point I wish to emphasise, in passing, is that this confusion arising out of reason—discussion, difference of opinion, crudity of thought—does not invalidate the fact that religion is an instinct, and that it is a permanent, an inherited, and eternal part of human nature and human life. Men may discuss, as they have for countless ages, the nature of light. They know very little about it; yet it does not invalidate the fact that light will show them the way, that they can walk in it. It does not invalidate the fact that sun-rays make the plants grow and the flowers open. They may theorise and speculate as much as they please as to how this is done; but the fact is indisputable. So men may speculate about the nature of electricity; but electricity is still a power that is moving

the mechanism of the modern world and illuminating the planet as it has never been illumined before. No one knows what electricity is. People may discuss endless theories concerning it; but the fact that it is life and light remains.

So men may discuss endlessly their theories of religion; but the fact that religion is comfort and life and health and hope and peace remains. And just as the most ignorant person, who would not be able to read a discussion as to the nature of light, may still walk in it as well as the wise, so the poorest and humblest in any department of human life or in any religion may, with all his crude and false and wrong theories of the universe and of God and man, find comfort, peace, and strength and help in the consciousness that he is a child of God and that God cares for him, in communion with God; in the feeling that from Him come light and strength and help such as he can get from no other source.

In the nature of things, as I hinted a page or two ago, our theories, our theologies, must change. The threefold nature of man constitutes a threefold necessity for this change; so that the people who cry out against the fact that theological opinion wanes and passes away, those who are afraid of this fact, think-

ing that it touches the essential religious life of the world, those who rejoice in the fact because they believe that religion itself is going to pass away,—none of these people, it seems to me, are very wise.

Consider for a moment. Man comes on to this planet a child, ignorant of himself, ignorant of his origin, ignorant of his home, looking with eyes of wonder at the skies above him, knowing nothing of any of these things. He begins to question, to speculate, to investigate, to study. He naturally thinks that the earth is flat, that the sky is only a little way off, that the stars are much smaller than the sun and moon. How could he have any different idea? He begins to speculate in regard to the invisible and unseen powers around him, as to his own nature, by and by coming to think of himself as dual, having a soul or being a soul, whichever way he chooses to put it; but of necessity his ideas concerning all these subjects are childish and crude and inadequate. So far as they touch the religious life of the world, they constitute his theology; and the priesthoods of every age have always claimed that the theological teachings of their little scheme of religion have been infallibly revealed, and that it was wicked to question.

This has been the universal belief of the world, growing out of man's reverence for what he supposed to be divine truth. But the very stating of the facts shows the absolute necessity of man's outgrowing all these theories if he is ever to become civilised, if he is ever to grow to be something finer and better than he was when he began. As Paul says of the individual life, " When I was a child, I thought as a child, I spake as a child, understood as a child," so the race, when it was a child, thought and spake and understood as a child. As it grows, it leaves behind its childish thoughts and accepts better ones.

But that does not mean that the thoughts of to-day are permanent. Theologies, all of them, in their very nature are passing. They cannot remain, because we know in part only; and, when we come to know a little better, that which is in part is done away. Not only the intellectual nature of man, but the moral nature of man, determines this as a necessity. It was very easy for barbaric people to have barbaric thoughts about God, to think of Him as passionate, to think of Him as partial, as jealous, as moved and instigated by all the low motives and passions which instigated and moved themselves. This was inevitable. A

man to-day cannot think any higher thought of God than his highest thought of humanity, pursued as far as he can push it towards the infinite. So men in the past have never been able to think any better of God than they have been able to think of themselves.

But the time comes when men must feel differently about God. They cannot any longer endure these crude, these immoral ideas. The Old Testament has incidents where the writers authoritatively represent God as doing things that we should call infamous if any man did them to-day. It was perfectly natural, however. They thought the best they were capable of thinking at the time. But a point is reached at last when men feel as did Whittier when he put into a beautiful poem his higher moral ideals of the love and tenderness of the Father, and when, in answer to protest against this,—which was supposed to be dangerous doctrine,—he said, in two verses in his "Eternal Goodness" (the most remarkable religious poem of the world, I think):

"I trace your lines of argument,
Your logic linked and strong,
I weigh as one who dreads dissent
And fears a doubt as wrong;

"But yet my human hands are weak
To hold your iron creeds ;
Against the words ye bid me speak
The heart within me pleads."

Men come to that point. The immoral conceptions of the theologies of the past cannot longer be held, because men become better than the theological picture of their God; and they can no longer worship it.

And then there is a spiritual growth,—not only the intellectual and moral,—a spiritual growth, a spiritual conception of God. It was perfectly natural for the Hebrews—because they shared this idea, a similar one with all the tribes about them—to think of God as a being whom they could shut up in a box which they called their ark, and carried in battle. And when the Philistines captured the ark, they supposed they had lost their God along with it, and that therefore they had lost their power to fight until they got Him back again. This is perfectly natural in a certain stage of development.

It was perfectly natural for Rachel to think that she could not possibly live in a strange country without her gods. So she stole the images, and hid them in the furniture of her camel and sat upon them, in order to have them go with her.

But the spiritual conception of the world has outgrown that childishness. Though it is imbedded in a thousand creeds, it is not vital and cannot be vital any longer. Away above that is the conception of Isaiah, which must have sounded sublime to the people of his time, when he speaks of God as sitting on the circle of the earth, and of the inhabitants as being like grasshoppers at His feet. And yet that does not sound very spiritual or significant to us. How much grander are the words of Jesus to the woman at the well! "Neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem shall men worship the Father. God is Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

The fact, then, that man is a being who starts as a child and who intellectually and morally and spiritually grows, carries with it the necessity that the theologies of the world shall be gradually outgrown.

Another point: I read with intense interest when I was a young man a book written by Dr. Draper, called *The Conflict between Religion and Science.* The title of the book is accurate enough, if you follow that definition of religion which makes it consist in its intellectual theories; but if you will note that the intellectual theories are not necessarily the

religion at all, but only the theology, then the title of the book is all wrong.

Ex-President White of Cornell has published a work for which he has taken a better title. He calls it *The Warfare of Science with Theology.* There has been plenty of warfare with theology; but, rightly defined, there never has been, and never can be, any conflict between science and religion. You may have a hundred theories concerning the nature of light, and there may be conflict between those theories; but there can be no conflict between science and the light. You may have theories about electricity which may fight each other for ages, but science can have no conflict with electricity.

There can be no conflict between religion and science, any more than there can be a warfare between science and the equator or science and the north pole. Religion is a fact, an universal and eternal element in human nature and human life; and all Science has to do with it is to observe it, to study it, to trace its development, to explain it if she can. But she has no conflict with it, no warfare against it. The warfare is always in the intellectual realm of theories, a fight between men's thoughts concerning things.

And it is this which has always separated peoples. Religion never separated man and man. It cannot in the nature of things.

If we read the ethnic scriptures of the world, we may see how profound thinkers in every age have gone down to this fundamental fact of the unity of religions.

"The object of all religions is alike. All men seek the object of their love, and all the world is love's dwelling."

Again :

"Why talk of a mosque or church ? He alone is a true Hindu whose heart is just ; and he alone is a true Mohammedan whose life is true."

And once more :

"The Supreme Being is sometimes with him who counts his prayers on sacred beads in the mosque and sometimes with him who bows down before idols in the temple. He is the companion of the Hindu, the intimate of the Mohammedan, the friend of the Christian, and the confidant of the Jew."

And once again :

"If thou art a Mussulman, go stay with the Franks ; if a Christian, seek the Jews ; if a Shiah, mix with the Schismatics : whatever thy religion, associate with men of opposite persuasion. If in hearing their discourses thou art not in the least moved, but canst mix with them freely, thou hast attained peace and art a master of creation."

These are hints of how some of the deepest thinkers have perceived this reality in the past ; and we are appreciating it to-day more and more. Take an illustration. Years ago, as you know, in Spain there was a wide-spread persecution against the Moors, who were Mohammedans in their religion, and they were driven out of the country.

Now note : The Moors were better scholars than the natives. They were just as good in their characters and lives. They were true and noble in their morals—at least as true and noble as were their persecutors. What was it that separated them ? What was it that led to the persecution ? In religion, deep down beneath their intellectual differences, they worshipped, though under other names, the same God ; and they believed that He required of them substantially the same courses of conduct. It was their intellectual theories that separated them into hostile camps. The Christians had come to believe that God had cast out the Mussulman because he was an infidel, an unbeliever,—not a bad liver,—an unbeliever, and that it was their most sacred duty to drive him, so far as they could, from the face of the earth. They believed that God would visit their country with

punishments and penalties if they tolerated the unbeliever among them. It was not a question of religion. It was a question of intellectual belief ; that is, of theology.

So it has been in all ages. It is a very striking fact that if, anywhere round the world, you go a hundred or a thousand or five thousand feet above the level of the sea, you will find substantially the same kinds of shrubs and trees and flowers everywhere,—not identical, not of the same name, but similar,—at the same altitude above the level of the sea. So as you travel round the world, in any nation, and rise to the same altitude of civilised development, you will find everywhere substantially the same ethical ideas, the same conceptions of conduct, the same thoughts about right and wrong. And this of necessity, because these are wrought out by human experience in the course of man's evolution.

So it is not these that have separated people. People have dreamed that their God hated with bitter hatred the man who did not believe as they did. You remember how Jesus rebuked his disciples, James and John, on a certain occasion. They were passing through a Samaritan village, and the villagers did not treat them as they thought they ought

to be treated; and the disciples said, "Master, wouldst thou that we call down fire from heaven and consume them, as did one of the ancient prophets?" And Jesus turned and rebuked them, and said, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." Jesus noted the fact that, wherever there is a heart feeling after God, He is not far off; that there is the essential religious life, no matter what the theory; and that this life ought to bind people together in a common sense of sonship of a common Father.

Just at the present time—and it is a curious phase of our development worthy of careful consideration — theological preaching, theological writing, theological discussion generally, is not very popular. I talk with people in Presbyterian, Congregational, Episcopal, and Methodist churches, and they say: "Our minister does not preach theology any more: he preaches conduct and life. We do not want to hear theological preaching." Curious; for let us see what it means. It does not mean that people are not interested in theology as much as they ever were, as it is easy to make clear. It means that they have outgrown the theologies of the past, are tired of them, no longer believe in them, that they

are no longer vital, that they represent a lower stage of thought and life to their minds.

Now, as a matter of fact, if we analyse a little carefully, we shall find that the new thought which they do like, this matter of life and character, is just as theological as the old. So while I have said that theologies are dying and passing away, and constantly being outgrown in every age, I wish to emphasise the fact that theology in the singular is as permanent a thing in human life as religion itself. It can never be outgrown.

If, for example, I dislike the theology of the past concerning God, and do not want to hear that any more—if I do not care anything about the Doctrine of Election, of Foreordination, of Eternal Punishment, if I want to hear about conduct, about love, honesty, truth, mutual help, human service, and thus think I have outgrown theology, then I must stop and consider for a moment. A man tells me to be good. I ask him: "What is goodness? What do you mean by it, and why should I be good?" Then he must theologise in order to answer: he must give me a theory of the universe, and of human nature, and of God and human life, in defining what goodness is, and giving me a reason why I should be good.

So, when we say the world is outgrowing theology, we mean it is outgrowing an old type, and that a new type is coming to take its place. No sermon can possibly be preached without there being implied in it a theory of the universe, of God, of man, of duty, of destiny. All of them are by implication in every possible sermon that a man can preach. If you do not think about them clearly, and so comprehend the fact, that does not destroy the fact.

Theology, then, is to abide. We must, if we think at all, have certain theories. This is not confined to our religious life. The modern world has its new astronomy, its new geology, its new chemistry. The old theories have passed away; but the new theories have come. These theories seem to be accurate at the present time. They may not be permanent, possibly they will be outgrown by and by; but if so, it will mean simply that we have newer knowledge and the old theories are discredited in the light of it.

So, while theologies pass, while religions pass, in the old meaning of the term, theology must abide, just as religion must abide.

Let us now trace the growth and changes of one dogma as illustrating this fact and

showing its beauty and its beneficence. Take the nature and the service of Jesus in the history of the world. "What think ye of the Christ?" For hundreds of years in the early Church it was believed that the suffering and death of Christ was a price paid to the devil for the redemption of the race. In other words it was believed that man by his sin had voluntarily put himself into the hands of Satan; that he belonged to him, as a citizen of Germany belongs to the empire. This right of Satan over the human race even God recognised. So, when God undertook the work of delivering man from him, He paid him a price for the deliverance,—paid the suffering and the death of the Christ. And this idea was carried so far—and this is a good illustration of the point I made a little while ago as to the moral growth of the world—that they even taught that God condescended to cheat the devil in the bargain. The devil did not know that the Christ was divine, and that, therefore, he could not keep him permanently. So he proposed to let men go on condition of having the Christ delivered into his hands. God agreed to the terms and the bargain was made. But the Christ, being divine, escaped, and so the devil was cheated

out of both his prisoners and the price paid for their ransom.

This was taught as serious theology for hundreds of years. It then came to be believed and taught that Jesus paid the penalty for human sin; that he expiated the divine wrath. It was held that his suffering and death was a governmental device; that God could not maintain the moral government of the universe unless some one was punished, and so Jesus volunteered to bear the penalty.

When I was a young man, the newer theory, that of Dr. Horace Bushnell of Hartford, which was called the "Moral Theory," was very much talked about and considered. It is almost universally held now by the liberal thinkers of the older churches. According to this the suffering and death of Jesus do not produce a changed feeling of God towards men at all. They are supposed only to influence men, to make them see the evil of sin and the love of God, and so lead them to voluntary renunciation of sin and reconciliation with God.

Now all these theories have been concerned only with the nature of the work of Christ; but through all the ages, there have been the tender-hearted, the true, the mystics, loving,

simple souls, who have not been troubled about these theories. They have simply loved the Nazarene, have simply been changed and elevated and inspired and lifted by the life of Jesus. They have had their hearts softened by his teaching and learned where to set their steps. They have loved him, have followed him, have delighted in him. They have been transformed and wrought over into the likeness of his life through this love, without any regard to the theologies.

The theologies about him pass away; but Jesus remains to-day the supreme figure in human history, the light of the Father shining in his face, the tenderness of the Father in the words that fall from his lips, the clasp of human friendship and brotherhood and divine encouragement in his hands. He remains our guide, our inspiration, our helper, our comfort. But, if we stop to think about it, we must frame a theory. We reject the old theories as morally wrong, as spiritually defective; but the moment we think about him, we must have a theory to-day; so theology as well as religion abides. So long as man feels and loves, he will be religious; so long as he thinks, he will be theological. But the religions will grow as he advances;

and as he sloughs off one after another the theological theories of the past that have proved inadequate, he can only think out for himself some finer and better theory still. But all his knowledge, until he becomes infinite, will be in part; and, as he nears more and more the perfect, that which is in part shall progressively be done away.

III

THE UNIVERSE

EVERY religion has started in a cosmology; that is, the thought side, the theoretical side, of every religion is always bound up with a theory of things,—the nature, the origin of the world. It is no accident, therefore, that the first word in the Bible is a scientific word,—as scientific as the knowledge of that time would allow. "In the beginning the Elohim created the heavens and the earth."

It would be interesting to note the theories of things that have been held by different peoples in different parts of the world; but for our present purpose we will go no farther afield than to trace the growth of these theories, from the beginning in Hebrew thought, through Christian speculation, up to the present time. Trace the growth, do I say? What I really mean is that we are to note one or two phases of thought on this subject, so

that we can see the immense advance that has been made.

To the writer of Genesis the universe was a very small affair. It was a sort of two-story structure at first. There was the flat earth, either anchored in the midst of the surrounding ocean or fixed in some way in its place. It was roofed over by a firmament as solid as if beaten out by the smith from some malleable metal. In this firmament were windows for the rains to come through,—the waters that were stored above the firmament,—and to it were attached the sun, the moon, and the stars, to give light to the inhabitants of the earth. Above this firmament was the abode of God and His angels. This was the first thought of the universe.

As Hebrew imagination and experience grew, there at last came to be believed in a sort of basement,—shall I call it?—making it, instead of a two-story, a three-story structure. Beneath the surface of the earth there was an underground world, the abode of the spirits of the dead. This may stand as fairly representing the belief in the universe on the part of the Hebrews throughout almost their entire history as a nation.

It was a modification of this which was

held in the time of Jesus. In the early half of the second century there lived in Alexandria a famous mathematician and astronomer by the name of Ptolemy, who gave his name to what has come to be called the Ptolemaic theory of the universe. This held the minds of men until sometime in the fifteenth century. This Ptolemaic theory is the one that furnishes the framework of Dante's great poem and of Milton's epic. In this—to be brief—the earth was at the centre; and this was surrounded by and enclosed in a series of concentric crystal, transparent spheres,—to compare large things with small, very much like a nest of glass globes inside each other. To the first of these, and therefore the smallest, was attached the moon; to the next the sun, and to the rest in their order the then known planets. Outside of these was one to the surface of which were attached all the fixed stars. Beyond this was still another, close to heaven itself, and which was supposed in some mysterious way to be moved by divine power, and in its motion to carry around with it all the others.

In this way the movements of the heavenly bodies were explained in the Ptolemaic system; and these spheres are the ones we speak and

sing of still, though most of us have forgotten what we mean when we talk about the "music of the spheres" or when we refer to a star as "starting from its sphere." These were real, substantial things in this Ptolemaic theory, carrying the heavenly bodies around with them in their circling motions.

Those who believed in this theory had a good deal of difficulty as time went on in explaining astronomical facts; and they had to invent a great many additions to and modifications of their theory, because one after another it was noticed that the heavenly bodies did not behave as they ought, if this theory were true; until at last the difficulties grew so great that Prince Alphonso of Castile, an amateur astronomer and famous mathematician, said that if he had been present at the creation, he could have suggested a good many valuable improvements on the theory. The inconsistencies were so great that it was very difficult for a scholarly man any longer to accept the old ideas.

About the time that Columbus was discovering a new continent, Copernicus was discovering a new universe. He was a devout Catholic. He would not, if he could help it, affront or disturb the authorities of his Church; and

yet his knowledge of the universe grew to be such that he felt he must write it down in a book. Governed by considerations regarding his own safety, undoubtedly, his book was published—though I think it was dedicated to the pope—as a tentative theory, and during the very last year of his life. The first copy which the author ever saw was brought to him as he lay on his sick-bed, from which he never rose again. Had he lived he would undoubtedly have been persecuted for his teaching, as the book was placed on the *Index*, and all good Catholics were forbidden to read it.

But here was the beginning of what is now the universally accepted theory of the universe. One after another facts began to round out this theory. Galileo, Kepler, Newton, have added to our knowledge in these directions, until at last we are in the midst of this tremendous fact that surrounds us on every hand. Science, dreaded always by the Church, fought at every step by theology, by the ecclesiastics, the churchly authorities,—science at last has done for us what the Church was never able to do. It has given us a universe fit to be the garment, the home, the phenomenal manifestation of the infinite God.

We are all familiar with the facts that make this universe so overwhelming to us; and yet, to freshen your thought, perhaps I may be pardoned if I suggest one or two illustrations to help us to feel its vastness.

We say glibly, "This earth is twenty-five thousand miles in circumference"; and we have learned to adjust ourselves to the thought that I used to repeat as a little couplet in my child's geography,—

> "This world is round, wise men declare,
> And hung on nothing in the air."

These are familiar facts to us. But we do not think of them enough to appreciate how tremendous they are. We say the moon is two hundred thousand miles away. Do we stop to appreciate that, as we rejoice in the beauty of it on some summer night? How large is the sun? Large enough so that, if it were a hollow sphere with the earth at its centre, the moon, two hundred thousand miles away, would have free room to swing in her orbit inside the sun.

To hint another illustration: if all the planets, all the moons, all the comets, asteroids, all the bodies that make up this solar system of ours, except the sun, were fused into one

globe, and that were hurled against the face of the sun, it would be so small a spot that it would hardly show, being less than three per cent. of the sun itself in bulk.

This sun, we say, is between ninety-two and ninety-three millions of miles away; and the light, which seems to cross the space between the moon and the earth instantaneously, takes a little over eight minutes to reach us from the sun. But this same light, travelling with this incredible velocity, —or inconceivable, shall I say?—has to journey for three years and a half before it reaches our next-door neighbour beyond our little solar system. The nearest body to our little group is so far away that it takes light about three years and a half to reach us. If I remember accurately, the next friend beyond that is about seven years away, as light travels. When I was a boy, and looked up to the skies, I wondered that there were not frequent collisions there, the blue seemed so crowded; but when we remember the inconceivable distances, we wonder, rather, that they can have any influence whatever over each other. But when we have reached these, our next-door neighbours, we are only standing on the threshold of star-lighted avenues that reach

on and on and on until imagination faints, though we know that we have only begun an endless journey.

The universe, then, overwhelms us by its vastness, as we try to think of it; and if we suppose that God is still beyond the stars, as they used to think Him to be, why, then, He is put at almost an infinite remove from us. And if we think that heaven is away beyond these luminous orbs, then the souls of our friends that have left us have started on an infinite journey.

There are those who tell us that all the facts of this universe can be accounted for simply by supposing the existence of matter and force, without any intelligence or any life except that which is the product of matter and force, thrown up as the waves of the sea are thrown up for a little while into the light and the air, to go back and be re-absorbed once more.

Let us contemplate this universe, then, for a few moments, and see in the light of the best science of the modern world what we are to think about it. There is a large body of people who fancy themselves thinkers at the present time who have made the word "metaphysics" a weariness to all those who try to

keep themselves level-headed and sane. They tell us that our senses misreport all the facts, that we cannot know anything by means of our senses, that matter is an illusion, not real at all, and that the only thing that is real is mind.

There are certain apparent facts which seem to justify this shallow conclusion. I look at the sun and the moon; and they seem very small to me and not very far away, so that it is easy for one to say that his sight has deluded him. But except for my sight I should not know that there exists any sun or moon at all, either near or far. We talk about the sun's rising and setting. It appears to rise and set, but we have found out that this is not true. The sun is substantially still, so far as this system of ours is concerned, though we believe it to be itself travelling with unspeakable velocity around some more distant sun. We look at a flower, at a rose, and we talk about the beautiful colour. We have learned that the colour is not in the rose. We listen to the sound of the waves on the sea-shore. We have learned that apart from our ears and our consciousness there is no sound on the sea-shore. We have learned that all these phenomenal manifestations, light, and heat, and

electricity, and magnetism, and colour, and sound, are modes of motion, touching us, our senses, and then transformed in our consciousness in some at present unknown way into what they seem to us to be.

Is the universe therefore illusion? Nay, but there is an outside reality there, an eternal reality which appeals to us, and becomes these things in our consciousness. We know now that, whether man is immortal or not, what we call matter is. We can demonstrate over and over again that both force and matter are indestructible. What they are in themselves is another problem; and I venture to say that it is a problem which does not concern us, except as a matter of intellectual curiosity.

So far as we can think, nothing is anything "in itself." Everything is what it is as related to the perceiving intelligence. Sound, light, colour,—all these things are what they are to us who perceive and use them. What they might conceivably be to some other kind of being may be a matter of interest; but it is of no practical importance to us. What they are to us, being what we are, is that which concerns us, and is the only thing which we need to know.

This universe, then, that surrounds us on

every hand is a reality: it is an indestructible and eternal reality; and it is to us all these fair and beautiful things translated into terms of our consciousness and become ministers to our use and to our joy.

Now, if we turn in another direction, it is interesting for us to try to find out what this thing that we call "matter" is. For we must outgrow the childishness of supposing that we know a thing merely because we have named and labelled it. What is this which we call "matter"?

The man who knows very little, indeed, is the one who thinks, perhaps, that he knows the most on this subject. Matter is something hard; it is something solid; it is something he can spurn with his foot or kick with his boot, — something very substantial. So he thinks. But the most substantial thing that we can find we can turn into invisible vapor; and, if we leave it free, it disappears beyond the reach of any of our senses. What is this hard and solid thing, then, that we call matter?

We have learned, for example, that there is no such thing as a solid bit of matter, meaning by that that the particles are in contact with each other. The most solid thing in the world can be compressed until it is smaller

than it was. That means that the particles do not really touch each other: they can be pressed nearer and nearer together. For the particles, even of a bit of marble, are not in contact and they are not still. They are in a perpetual dance, as much as are the bodies in the sky over our heads. They have their own marvellous orbit; and the "solid" thing is all athrill with motion.

They used to talk about a something called "dead matter" which the Creator originally impressed with certain qualities. He made one substance hard and another soft, one red and another green, one metallic and another of a woody fibre. He impressed these qualities on these hard substances, they said; but we go in pursuit of this hard matter, and it is impossible for us to discover it anywhere. There used to be, and there is now, in the theories of chemistry for practical purposes, something called an "atom," an atom supposed to be the ultimate hard substance through a combination of which all other substances were made. But, when we thought about an atom as a real substance, a real solid bit of something that we could deal with through our senses, we were plunged into a sea of absurdities. Then we pursued this

atom with the microscope, with every instrument of research that we could discover, until we found at last that we were in the presence of what Faraday called a "point of force," or what others have named "a vibratory thrill," or others still "a vortex in the ether."

We hunt for matter, then, as some solid, hard thing; and we cannot find it. We do find, however, everywhere, this infinite, tireless movement and life. We find that the universe is athrill from the lowest depths that the microscope can discover to the farthest range of the telescope over our heads,—everything, everywhere, apparently alive. And these little particles of matter, so far as they can be discovered, have behaved in such a strange way that the materialistic philosophers themselves have been compelled to reconstruct their theories about them. Clifford, one of the most brilliant materialists that England has produced during the last fifty years,—it is a pity that he died so young,—used to tell us about a little "mind-stuff" in every particle of matter. He could not account for the behaviour of matter in any other way. Haeckel, the German scientist, talks about "atom souls." He cannot account for the action of atoms in crystals, in growing plants, and in

man without supposing that they have connected with them soul or mind substance, out of which ultimately our own souls are built.

So the materialists themselves have had to give up what is called the materialistic theory of things,—the idea that the universe is made out of any substance called dead matter that has been wrought upon from the outside by a creative power, and that it has had these forces and these qualities impressed upon it by some divine artificer.

We find, then, so far as we can trace it, that this universe is a thrill with such mysterious and subtle forces that we are beginning to wonder if it is not a living creature. Take such a fact as wireless telegraphy, and a thousand others that are given us by modern science, and which are becoming so familiar to us that we are apt to overlook the marvel and significance of it all.

Then consider thought-transference. We have not yet mastered the law of it, we cannot yet use this power at will; but it is demonstrated beyond all rational question that minds can communicate without any regard to distance, and practically without any regard to time, clear round the world. I know cases of this thought-transference from the Indian

Ocean to the Atlantic. I know a case recently from Manila to New York. Thousands of them have been demonstrated to be true. The world is a whispering-gallery; and it is all alive in response to our thoughts, our feelings, our hopes, our fears, our human activities.

What kind of strange thing, then, is this universe? If I remember rightly, Swedenborg told us that the universe was in the form of a man. What if we should come to the conclusion at last that the universe is a living organism instead of a mechanism?—that it is a living being, thrilling with life in every particle? We are being driven, scientifically driven, to that conclusion. Because certain things, different parts of the universe, are outside of our consciousness, does not prove that they are outside of some consciousness. To take an illustration suggested by a book of Flammarion's (in English entitled *The Unknown*); We know that these bodies of ours are full of thousands, perhaps millions, of microbes, and they are not enemies of ours, the most of them: in health they are our friends. But suppose one of these microbes given conscious power of thought similar to our own; and, as he sailed down the Amazon or Mississippi, to him, of one of our veins, or as

he bored or tunnelled his way through the immense rocky strata of one of our bones, or as he watched some part of our heart, not conscious of it as an organ by itself and fulfilling its own peculiar function,—suppose he should try to speculate as to a consciousness that could give life and the sense of personal identity to this structure, as large and incomprehensible to him as the universe itself is to us.

I think it is Martineau who said that, for all any scientific person knew to the contrary, the dance of the planetary systems over our heads might be the dance of the brain molecules of some cosmic consciousness. These thoughts overwhelm us, and seem incredible at first. But there is nothing incredible about them. It is simply a question of fact; and, as already said, we are being driven more and more to the belief that this universe is a living organism. And I incline strongly to the belief that God is the intellect, the heart, the soul of it, as I am the intellect, the heart, the soul of this organism called my body.

And, if we may think of it in this way, then God is not away off in any heaven. He is everywhere; and He is all everywhere at any instant of time, as I am all, for any practical

purpose, in every part of my body at any particular moment of time.

This is the conception of the universe that we are coming more and more in some form to hold. The universe is a living being, and that which is the life of that universe is close by us; and we are a part of this infinite life.

We need here to guard ourselves against one serious error. Because of what has been said, we are not to confuse or confound the distinction between mind and matter. It is common just now for certain people, who think they are thinkers, to say "all is mind." But what we call matter—whatever its ultimate origin may be—is a distinct and definite fact, governed in accordance with its own laws, as ascertained by the senses and experience of man. This material order, of which our bodies are a part, is as divine and holy as the mental or spiritual order. To deny it or disregard it is not piety but the contrary. For one is of God as truly as is the other. It is not spirituality, but only mental confusion which blurs this distinction.

It is worth while to note one or two points briefly as indicating the moral and spiritual significance of this view of the universe.

The universe is an intelligent being, which-

ever way we turn. Wherever we pursue our investigations, we find an intelligible order, perfect of its kind. That which matches our intelligence, and that which is intelligible, we can only interpret as the manifestation of intelligence. I believe, then, that this universe is a living organism, and that it is intelligible and intelligent from circumference to centre.

Not only that. In the second place it is beneficent. In spite of all the evils, in spite of all the sufferings, the pains, and the sorrow, the universe is a beneficent organism. In the nature of things, if we stop and think of it a moment, it cannot be anything else. Life and joy are the result always of keeping the laws of this universe. Pain, sorrow, what we call evil, premature death,—these are always the result of law-breaking. The universe is in favour of the keeping of its own laws. It is in favour of life, of joy, of good, which are the result of the keeping of these laws. It seems to me that this is demonstrable truth.

Then the universe is the embodiment of a purpose. We can trace an intelligent advance, from the first beginning of our investigation up the ages, until to-day; and we can see that the universe is still on the march,—

it is not through. To quote again, words already quoted till they are trite, it is reaching toward some

"far-off divine event,"

as Tennyson has sung.

We cannot escape the conclusion that the universe is moving with a purpose towards an outcome: living, intelligent, beneficent, advancing, progressing. Such is our modern thought of this marvellous universe of which we are a part.

Now ethics in a universe like this, the laws of right and wrong, cannot be something imported from outside, cannot be external legislation, cannot be arbitrary enactments, with arbitrary rewards and punishments attached. Right and wrong are in the nature of things. Law-keeping is right,—that is, living in accord with this infinite and eternal life; and law-breaking is wrong, living out of accord with this eternal and beneficent life.

And religion cannot be something imported from without. It cannot be a thing of ceremonies or creeds. I say nothing against ceremonies. If ceremonies express a real feeling, or help cultivate a real feeling, well and good. They may be of service. I say nothing

against creeds. If a man believe rightly, it will help him to act rightly. For this reason, and to this extent, his creed is important. But the idea of a creed, or believing such and such a thing, as a vital matter in the sense that somebody is going to be offended if we do not,—that is all wrong. These things are not important in that sense.

The one thing that is essential and vital in religion is life,—living in accord with the infinite life of the Infinite Power manifested in the universe. Whatever helps that life helps our religious culture and development. Whatever stands in the way of these stands in the way of our religious life. But the life itself—the feeling, the love, the consecration, the service—these are the religion.

IV

MAN

IN the early part of the sixth century before Christ there lived in Sparta a man by the name of Chilon. He was one of the reputed Seven Sages of Greece; and to him is attributed one of the most famous sayings of the world,—"Know thyself." He taught that the most important object of human knowledge was human nature.

And, as we think of it, we are compelled to recognise that our theories and systems of religion depend very largely upon our conception of the origin and nature of man. Our ethical schemes are determined by what we think about ourselves. The origin of man is intimately, inextricably associated with our thought as to the kind of being he is; and dependent on this thought—as to the kind of being he is—are our dreams of his destiny, both in this world and any possible world in the future. It ought to be, then, the most

interesting, as it is the most important, thing for us to study,—the origin and nature of man.

From the beginning of the world until within the last half-century, substantially the same ideas have been held concerning human origins. In other words, all religions, all races, have believed that man was, at some time in the history of the past, made,—made by a being working on material from without, as a sculptor might fashion and shape his clay. You are familiar with the story which lies at the foundation of our religion, and which I need to note merely for the sake of refreshing your memory with what you already know.

The early chapters of Genesis, though they were not put into their present form until late in the history of the Hebrew people, tell us that God created man in His own image—that He took the dust of the earth and shaped the human body. Then He breathed into the nostrils the breath of life, and this body became a living creature. The use of the word "soul" there does not determine anything as to what we mean when we discuss the question of the nature of the soul and its possible immortality: it means simply that this man, created out of the dust, became alive when God breathed into his nostrils.

Then it is said that God formed a garden eastward in Eden, and in it planted all trees that were goodly to look at and good for food. And He placed the man and the woman—whom He created afterward—as the keepers of this garden, forbidding only one thing,—that they should taste of the fruit of one particular tree. They disobeyed this explicit order after they were tempted by the serpent, who in later time came to be regarded as the same as the devil. And, as the result of this disobedience, they were cast out of the garden. And all the evils that have been known from the beginning of creation until now have followed that act of disobedience and that expulsion.

Moral evil came, so that man has been regarded in all the great theologies of Christendom as incapable of any moral good. This is the familiar doctrine of total depravity; and it is a perfectly logical doctrine. It means simply that man is a rebel against his rightful Ruler; and, so long as he continues in this attitude of rebellion, he cannot do any good thing,—anything which his Ruler will accept as good. This rebellious attitude vitiates all his actions and his nature,—a perfectly logical outcome.

As the result of this, sin, pain, and sorrow came into the world. And, finally, man was doomed to death,—not simply a death which means the dissolution of this physical body; but, as we have all been taught, no matter in what Christian denomination we may have been trained, there waits those who are not saved a second death which is eternal.

This is the ordinary story as to the origin and nature of man which was taught by the Jews after it was borrowed, during the time of their captivity, and which has been held from that day to this in Christendom, and accepted with practical universality. Man created then perfect, voluntarily rebelling against God, and moral evil, suffering, death,—the penalties inflicted by the Divine Power,—these make up the tale of human history.

It is very strange that until within the last fifty years there has practically been no rational study whatever anywhere in the world that has attempted to investigate the problems of the origin and the nature of man. This seems like a startling statement; but you will see how reasonable it is when I remind you of the fact that among early, ignorant peoples there were no means of study or investigation. The mind of man had not sufficiently devel-

oped to make him capable of undertaking so gigantic a task. And then there were religious prejudice and tradition — among the most powerful influences in the world—standing in the way. The credulous early tribes easily accepted without question any statement made to them by their leaders and their priests, and did not think of studying the matter, even if they had been able to study it, which they were not.

There was then no rational investigation in this direction until the two or three centuries of the last part of the history of Greece preceding the birth of Christ. Science in some true sense had been born and was beginning to develop among the later Greeks. But, unfortunately, young Christianity adopted a Persian or Babylonian legend which the Jews had borrowed,—adopted it as an infallible, divine revelation explaining the origin and nature of man. For this story of the creation, the Garden of Eden, the serpent, and the fall, was not even original with the Jews. It was Persian or Babylonian tradition, which, as has already been said, was borrowed during the time of the captivity.

Early Christianity accepted this story as infallibly revealing divine truth. So, do you

not see, for the first fifteen hundred years of Christian history scientific investigation was practically impossible? It was forbidden as heresy; it was daring to doubt the word of God. So, when the mind of man did wake up after the long sleep of the early centuries and the Middle Ages, and began to question, the questioning had to be done by stealth. Men investigated in hidden corners, in out-of-the-way places; they involved their theories of truth in allegories; they would put forth tentatively a statement which, to the modern reader, clearly shows what they were really believing, and then, on the basis of revelation, apparently deny and repudiate it, because they dared not do otherwise.

There was, then, say for fifteen hundred years, no science, no investigation, as to these great problems. Then men began to dare to think; began to win intellectual freedom, so that it was safe to think; achieved at last thinking independence; and then for the first time since the world began were we in a condition to attack a problem like this with any hope of its solution.

In the modern world there were foregleams and precursors of what in all future ages will be regarded as the most distinguishing feature

of the nineteenth century, the Doctrine of Evolution. Who framed it? Buffon, Goethe, Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, Lamarck, the elder Darwin—men like these speculated, felt their way, wondered, asked questions, but came to no solution. Herbert Spencer, in 1852, published an article called "The Development Hypothesis," in which he outlined the entire scheme of evolution, including the universe as we know it to-day. But this was philosophy, and not science. Herbert Spencer no more than his predecessors had put his finger on the key-point of the situation. That is, he did not point out a real cause which could account for supposed changes. In 1859, seven years later, Darwin published *The Origin of Species*. Alfred Russel Wallace, still living, and then at work in the Malay Archipelago, had hit upon an independent discovery of the same great natural truth.

Never since the world began has a book met with such a tempest and storm of obloquy, abuse, and ridicule as did this book of Darwin's. The religious world was aghast. Here was flat and outright denial of revelation. Here was blasphemy. Here was the degradation of man, making him akin to the lower orders of life on the earth. And the witty paragraphists of

the newspapers have found in the supposed monkey-origin of the race infinite fund for ridicule, from that day to this, developing many varieties of wit, and exposing the fact either that they were too ignorant to know what they were talking about or else that they were willing to accept the charge of ignorance because it gave them an opportunity to appear smart.

Never, I say, has any book been so abused as this; but it rapidly made its way among the competent, the minds of those who had been seeking for some light on the origin and nature of man, until to-day there is not a thinker on the face of the earth who is aware of the facts who dares to question the substantial truth of the great discovery which Darwin made.

What is this discovery? It is a discovery that all the forms of life we see on the globe are growths, not outright creations. It had been believed, taught by all naturalists until very recent years, that God created outright, in a moment, certain types and forms of life. Then there was some great catastrophe which destroyed them all and then He created another and higher type; and so on step by step, as the forms of life have advanced. God has made

the new conditions and then matched these by new and special creations of new and higher types of organism. This had been the belief until the epoch-making book of Darwin in 1859. Since that day all the world has come to think of the universe itself as a growth, an unfolding.

As a part of the evolution of the universe this earth appeared. Then the lower types of life. From these low beginnings the forms of life have climbed by natural gradation, one type of life growing out of, evolving from, the preceding. So there is genetic, vital connection between the lowest form of life on the earth and the highest and noblest type of man. We are all akin, one life. But note if you please, that this doctrine does not degrade and brutalise man : it lifts the level of all life, and teaches us to think of the lowest and highest as equally divine. It is one life everywhere, and that one life God. This is the outcome of the evolution teaching, and not that which was rashly regarded as its logical conclusion at the first.

I cannot go into an elaborate argument, if it were needed at this late day, to prove that man is evolved or developed from lower types of life ; but I can give you briefly two or three

facts which carry the argument with them irresistibly to any thoughtful man.

There are just three thinkable ways by which man could have appeared on this planet. We know that there was a time when he was not here: we know that now he is here. How did he get here—by what process? That is the problem which naturalists set themselves to study. You can think that the story in Genesis is literal fact, that the Almighty God of this universe took clay, as a sculptor does, and shaped it into the image of a man, then breathed into the nostrils and conferred life upon what was dead. That is a possible, thinkable theory. A "theory," I say, by way of courtesy; for it is not a scientific theory. A scientific theory must have some facts on which to base it, and out of which to construct it; but there are no facts in this connection. So it is not a scientific theory.

The second way by which man might possibly have come here is this. We may think that he might have been born of parents very much unlike himself; as though, for example a dog were born of a horse.

A third way is this,—he might have been born of parents slightly unlike himself. He might have appeared as an advance in certain

directions on this parent; and this may have been the method all the way down the line of the ages to the beginning.

Now here are three thinkable ways. If you were confronted with two or three possibilities, and one of them had a little evidence in its favour and the others had none at all, as a rational being you would feel compelled to accept that which had even the slightest amount of evidence, though you might not regard it as being nearly all you would like.

Now in regard to this theory of outright creation, in the nature of things there is no possibility of one slightest particle of evidence whatever. Proof is out of the question. In regard to the second theory, that man might have been born of parents very much unlike himself, there is no evidence, there is no possibility of proof of anything of the sort ever having occurred. For the third possible theory, that he might have been born of parents slightly unlike himself, and so have advanced beyond them, there is a good deal of evidence. In other words, all the evidence there is in the world is in favour of this theory, which is the theory of evolution,—that man has been developed gradually, slowly, from lower types of life.

Now what does this mean? I should be ashamed to presume that I needed to explain this point, did I not constantly see references to it in the great newspapers and hear it on every side in conversation. The popular opinion seems to be that Darwinism, or evolution, teaches that man has been developed from the ape; and this is the material for all the witty paragraphs which have enlivened the newspapers for the last forty years. Darwinism teaches nothing of the sort.

What does it teach? If I could draw a diagram on a blackboard, I could make the meaning very plain. Suppose you think of the evolution of life under the figure of a vine. Take an enormous grape-vine, if you please; picture it in your mind for a moment. As you come up the central stem, a branch goes off on one side: here is one type and kind of life, one species, we will say, of creature. A little farther up another branch starts off, and develops into another type of life; still higher, another branch; still higher, another branch, —and so on, branching out into one kind of life after another. But evolution does not teach that one species ever directly developed into another species.

In other words, we find the fishes; then

above them are the reptiles; but no full-grown and developed fish ever changed into a reptile. After the reptiles, you have the birds; but no completed reptile ever became a bird. After the birds you have the mammals; but no bird ever developed into a mammal. This is not evolution, this is not Darwinism.

What does it teach? We know that there are creatures, we find their remains in the earth's strata, who are half-bird and half-reptile: they have the characteristics of both, so that it is difficult for the naturalist to tell which they really are. What does this mean? It means that before the birds and the reptiles had become completely separated from each other there were these creatures with the characteristics of the two, and that then one branch of life shot off in one direction and developed all the reptiles, completed reptilian life in its widely various forms; and above this juncture where you find the characteristics of both, another branch shot off, and developed into all the bird-like forms.

So there was a point down below man, and below the ape, where there were creatures manifesting the characteristics of both the ape and the man, and where it would be very difficult, indeed, for a naturalist to tell

whether the creature was ape or man. But by and by the ape-like forms go their own way; and above, from this trunk of life, there shoots out a branch, and the lowest manifestation of it is the lowest type of the human. This is what evolution teaches, that there has been this gradual development of all these various forms of life, until on the topmost bough there comes as fruitage this wonderful human nature of ours, summing up in itself the characteristics of all the forms of life that have preceded it, keeping whatever is useful to it, and yet developing something higher and finer.

Man, then, originated in this purely natural way; not without the help and guidance of God, but under God's guidance. In other words, it is not a question as to whether God created us or made us, whatever word you choose to use, or as to whether He is our Father. It is simply a question of process, of method, as to how we came to be what we are.

I have been asked a great many times whether this theory of the origin of man does not make it difficult for us to believe in the soul. Where does the soul come in? There is no more difficulty about it on this theory than

there is on the other. It has always been a matter of speculation among philosophers as to where the soul comes from. In the old days, in the Middle Ages, among the schoolmen, you will find, if you care to look into the matter, that there were three speculative theories. A certain set of men taught that all souls were pre-existent, and that, when a new babe was born, he was furnished with a soul that may have been as old as the angels or as old almost as God Himself. For a previous immortality has been believed in by some, as well as an immortality of the future.

Then there was the theory called Traducianism. It was believed that man inherited his soul from his father and mother, as he inherited his other faculties and qualities. Then there was Creationism, which taught that God created a new soul for every baby born into the world. So this question as to where the soul comes from is not necessarily connected with evolution. It is as old as human thought.

I believe that the soul began when man began. We know that the animals below us are conscious; but they are not self-conscious. No animal ever thinks "I." No horse or dog ever thinks, I am a horse, I am a dog, or wonders at the difference between itself

and some other animal. But, when man appeared, the "I," the "ego," the self-conscious entity was born. In other words, I believe that the divine life which was in the grass-blade and which climbed up through the infinite ages, manifesting itself in every type and form of life until man appeared, with man became integrated into the ego, so that man felt he was a self, and could speak of God as his Father, and could reasonably expect to go on, starting out upon an infinite pathway that leads into the future.

Darwinism, it seems to me (and I must take your time long enough to dwell for a moment on this), gives us an entirely rational and a much more hopeful account of the origin, or existence, rather, of evil, of pain, of sorrow, of death, than does the old theory. It seems to me a hopeless way of looking at human history to suppose that we began in perfection, that we immediately fell, and that God was angry with us and has been punishing the world ever since with moral evil and pain and infinite suffering after death. If we accept evolution, which has been demonstrated as true, where do we land? Note I say, demonstrated as true. It is no theory in the sense that you are at liberty to accept

or reject it, as you please. It is proved to be true.

What is the outcome of it? In the first place, we are confronted with this significant and wonderful fact. The world has puzzled itself always over the origin of evil,—why God permitted evil. But, now that we think of man in the light of this new and magnificent truth, we have no origin of evil to contend with or account for. It is the origin of goodness that we are to think of. For in this lower animal world all that we think of as evil,—jealousy, hatred, selfishness, greed, horrors, wars, murders, death,—all these things existed from the first. They existed before man appeared; but they were not evil, because there was no conscience, there was no standard of right and wrong. It was not an immoral world: it was an unmoral world. So that, when man appeared, instead of its being the origin of evil, it was the origin of goodness. When the conscience first became developed and man was able to recognise himself as capable of doing either right or wrong, then he took an immense step in advance. It was not a fall: it was an ascent. So this greater truth for ever does away with all possibility of belief in the Fall of Man.

The recognition of the distinction between right and wrong was an immense step in advance. Man became a moral being, capable of improvement, looking down upon his lower self, seeing the imperfections of his nature, and striving to outgrow them and leave them behind. So there is no doctrine of the introduction of evil into a good universe, on this theory: it is the coming of good, the recognition of good in an unmoral universe.

Again, we have not to think of God's inflicting pain as a punishment. People have been asking from the beginning of the world until to-day: What have I done that God inflicts this punishment upon me? Why does He make me suffer? Why must my nerves thrill and tingle with pain? Think for a moment. In the light of this theory, pain as an argument against the goodness of God utterly disappears. There are two kinds of pain in the universe. There is the necessary pain, and the needless pain,—the pain that we bring upon ourselves without our being obliged to do it and that which we voluntarily inflict on other people. These things are evil, but God is not responsible for them: they are not a charge against His goodness.

Now, all the necessary pain of the world

is seen to be infinitely beneficent. Instead of its being something that we must account for, apologise for, it is something to be grateful for. You cannot conceive of the existence of nerves which can thrill with pleasure without their also being capable of thrilling with pain. Then, if a race of creatures could be created and placed upon the earth incapable of feeling pain, they would be wiped out of existence in six months. The necessary pain of the world is simply the signal set up marked "Danger," "No thoroughfare," warning us against things that would do us harm. All the needful pain of the world is a token of the love, the beneficence, the kindliness, and the care of our Father.

Then, too, death, instead of being the last great evil, the one final curse of God, the mark of His disapprobation of a ruined and fallen race—death is found to be as natural as life, a part of the divine order, not something to be accounted for; as natural as the sunset after a sunrise, that which rounds out human life. Death is not an evil—I mean natural death, death after a well-ordered life: it is only premature death, which God, again, is not generally responsible for, which is an evil. If there be another life, then

death is the greatest blessing that God has conferred in love and tenderness upon His children; for it is the gateway of immortality.

You see, then, in the light of this theory of evolution, this way of looking at the origin and nature of man, the old difficulties fade away, the problems are changed, and, though they were thought to be insoluble, are found to be capable of solution.

And now at the last I wish to call your attention to the fact that the disproof of the doctrine of the Fall of Man has in it the seed of the universal dissolution of the theologies of Christendom. Every one of the theologies of Christendom has been based on the doctrine of the Fall of Man: their scheme of theology has been a plan for the saving of man from the results of the supposed fall. Within the last fifty years, as I have said,—and inevitably then because it could not have come before,—it has been demonstrated that what was supposed to be a fall is an ascent; and every one of the great and towering theologies of Christendom are crumbling at their foundations, and of necessity must fall.

It is a new problem which is presented to the world; and the churches are beginning to readjust themselves to it instinctively and

gradually. Less and less do they talk about the wrath of God, less and less about the fall of man: it has become poetry, an allegory. Less and less do they frighten men and women with lurid pictures of the coming horrors of another life. More and more do they tell us that it is possible for men naturally to be good, and that the one great end and object of all churches and all preaching and all human effort is to help men to be good. Less and less do we hear of salvation, in the technical sense of that word. More and more do we hear of education, of training, of helping to set the human race in better conditions, of cleansing and purifying our environments, of making it possible for people to live sweet and simple and wholesome lives. More and more talk do we hear of improving the conditions that surround us. These are taking the place of the old ideas of a supernatural salvation from an eternal woe.

It is education that the race needs, not salvation. I am using the words in the technical sense. Not education in the sense of teaching people things,—that is not education,—education in the sense of unfolding, evolving, developing what is in man, his capacities

and possibilities. What the race needs is a chance to live and become its best self.

I do not for a moment think that the life and teaching, the lovely figure, of the Nazarene are to pass away or lessen in their influence. I believe that Jesus in the ages to come will be more and more; for Jesus did not teach what have become the fundamental principles and ideas of the theology that has worn his name. Jesus is the ideal man, the son of God, the embodiment of love and tenderness and pity and human help. So he will march on, radiant as the morning, leading the advance of mankind, an ideal, unapproachable because we shall lift him and make him more and more beautiful in our thought as the world advances. He will influence and stimulate and lift up the race.

But henceforth the problem of religion is not to save us from the wrath of a God which does not exist, is not to deliver us from a hell which is a figment of the barbaric imaginations of the ancient world: it is to develop man more and more, to carry on the work of evolution; for evolution is done, practically, with our physical form, so far as man is concerned.

Note one very interesting thing. The lowest forms of life are horizontal. As life lifts,

creatures begin to rise, until, when you come to man, he is perpendicular. You can carry the process no further unless you reverse it and revert to the original form. The body is complete except that it may be made finer and finer. Evolution has transferred its working to the mind, the heart, the moral nature, the soul; and so the ages that are to come shall find man ever growing more and more into the likeness of his ideal, which is the likeness of his Father, God.

V

BIBLES

HAS God ever spoken to men? If so, has He got through speaking, or does He speak to-day? Assuming that God exists, and that we are His children, we should certainly suppose that He would have something to say to us. We should expect, at least, that He would give us adequate guidance in the most important affairs of life. Has He spoken, then? Does He speak?

So far as we can trace the beliefs of the ancient world, men have always supposed that they received messages from the Unseen, from their gods, or, when they came to be monotheists, from their God. It may be well for us to note some of the many and various ways by which they have supposed these words of God to come.

Stepping outside our line of Christian tradition, we find the ancient priests believed that they could divine concerning the pur-

poses of the gods by watching the flight of birds or by studying the entrails of animals as they were being sacrificed. There were certain sacred trees in different parts of the world. It was supposed that the divine will could be learned by listening to the noise of the winds in the leaves of these trees, and interpreting the message.

In other parts of the world there were mysterious and sacred caverns, from which issued what we should call to-day natural gases. These gases had the power to produce certain effects which were called inspiration on the part of the priests who inhaled them, and what they said in these conditions were taken to be messages from the Unseen. Then revelations came by means of visions or voices. Those who were insane were supposed to be taken possession of, and to be speaking words of mysterious import. In all these many ways, and in others which need not be enumerated, people outside the line of our Christian history have believed that they received messages from the gods.

When we come to trace the beliefs of the people from whom we have inherited our religion, we find that they held similar beliefs. There were other ways besides these, also,

in which they trusted. We do not know just how they were used, but in the old days the high priests were believed to be able to communicate with the Divine by using the Urim and the Thummim. These were sacred stones. In what way they were supposed to communicate the divine will we are now not certain. They also expected to find out the hidden things by means of the ephod, a holy girdle worn by the high priest. It was not uncommon for them to cast lots, expecting God to direct how the lots should fall. We find the eleven apostles adopting this method in the sacred work of electing a twelfth man to take the place of Judas after the betrayal.

Not only among these were there visions, messages, voices, men sent, books written, but there were also dreams, there were ecstasies. St. Paul, for example, tells us how he was carried away in an ecstasy and visited the third heaven, hearing words and seeing things which it was not lawful for him at present to disclose.

In all these ways, then, and in many others men have supposed that they received messages from God. Of course, the most important way in the thought of Christendom to-day is that of being inspired to write certain parts

of a book which has come to be called the Bible. Before considering that, however, let us raise a preliminary question.

Is there any way that we can think of by which God could speak an infallible message to men? For, of course, the pivot on which the whole question turns is this matter of infallibility. Suppose a man has a vision, whether in the night or in the day. It may be an authentic thing to him. But can he convey it in any infallible way to others? We must trust him, —both for the accuracy of his statements and for his interpretation of the meaning of that which he has seen. Can we be sure that he is accurate always in his statements?

Suppose a man claims that the Holy Spirit has taken possession of him, and that he speaks by inspiration. He may be ever so thoroughly convinced of this; but how is he going to convince the world? We cannot help wondering as to whether he is mistaken; and when we find people claiming to be inspired, as we do, contradicting each other and giving inconsistent messages, then we feel sure that at least some of them must be mistaken, and it may be impracticable for us to decide which.

Take any message that you can imagine;

and by the time it has become a second or a third hand message, an element of uncertainty has entered in which makes it impossible for a rational man to have any trust in its infallibility.

Suppose a book be written; and let us concede for a moment that in the first instance it is absolutely infallible,—that is, it is a direct and precise expression of the thought and the will of God. But no words have ever yet been framed which conveyed precisely the same ideas to every class of mind and every grade of intelligence. So even this may not give the same message to everybody.

But by and by this original writing is lost. It has been copied: who knows whether the copyist was infallible? It has been copied over and over and over again, has passed through a hundred hands. It has been translated into other languages. Who knows whether the translator was infallible? So, if the original writer received the infallible word of God, by the next generation, by the time it was transmitted to some other people, an element of inevitable uncertainty has entered in. So I, for one, cannot conceive of any way but one—which, perhaps, I shall refer to by and by—through which we can get an infallible message from the Divine.

Suppose, for example, that the stars were arranged so as to read across the face of the night heavens, "There is a God," and to give us His name. Who could say but what they were accidentally arranged in that order? The words would necessarily, at any rate, be in some particular language. Who would be sure of the translation? You see, even in a thing like this, there would inevitably arise a question in the minds of after generations; for the arrangement of the constellations to-day is certainly as wonderful as though they spelled out words in some tongue which is no longer a living language.

There seems to me, then, no way by which we can escape a certain element of question as to the infallibility of any word that claims to come to us from God.

But now another question: Do we need an infallible revelation? If we do, why? If it indeed be true that the race is in a moral and spiritual condition such as it could not discover and find out for itself, and if it be further true that God has arbitrarily doomed the world to an endless hell in the future on account of this condition concerning which we are ignorant and are not wise enough to discover, why, then, of course, God would

have to tell us about it, and tell us very plainly. But a supposition like this would presuppose God to be an unjust and immoral being whose word even would not be worthy of our trust.

It does not seem to me, then, that we need an infallible revelation in religion any more than we need one in agriculture, any more than we need one in chemistry or geology or astrology or engineering or mechanics of any kind, any more than the financier needs one in Wall Street.

I suppose all of us would be glad to have infallible guidance in the particular matter in which we happen to be interested; but I do not believe that it would be well for us. And let me tell you why. If the world had had, years ago, an infallible revelation made in regard to any department of human endeavour, do you not see that it would have interfered with the development of the human mind itself? Every teacher knows that it is not wise to put in the hands of his pupil in mathematics a book containing the answer to all the problems. He knows, if he does, that the mathematical ability of the boy will never be developed as it must be by his own working out of those problems; and it is much more important

that the pupil be educated mathematically, to evolve, to develop in the process of study, than it is that he get the right answer. The right answer is entirely a secondary consideration. It is the growth and development of the pupil that is all-important.

Suppose God, a thousand years ago, had revealed to the world all that is known to-day about steam and its application to the many industries of life. The world would not have been ready for it in the first place—it would only partially have comprehended what it was all about; and it would have interfered with the education of the race out of which have come the invention, the discovery, and the mastery of this tremendous force.

I believe, then, that an infallible revelation in any department of human life would not be a good thing for us: it would be an evil thing.

And now let me appeal for a moment to history to justify my statement. There have been a great many infallible revelations given to the world; that is, if we are to trust the word of those who have received them. They have had them in India, two or three of them; in China, the teachings of Confucius; in Arabia, the Koran, the Bible of the Mohammedans. They had them in Old Testament

times, in New Testament times. We have had one or two in the modern world. The Book of Mormon is precisely as infallible as any other Bible that the world has ever received, if we are to take the opinions of its believers as settling the matter. And now the latest of them all, Mrs. Eddy, has made a deliberate and definite statement to the world that her book, *Science and Health*, is inspired; that she did not write it. So we have a large number of infallible books in the world. The only trouble with them for the student is that they do not at all agree with one another; and we cannot believe that God is the author of contradiction and confusion.

Go a little closer, and note another fact. Suppose you visit India or China or Arabia —any of the countries where they have an infallible book, it does not make a particle of difference which. Does the book which is an infallible revelation carry the same message to everybody? Not at all. You have schools, different philosophies, sects, divisions, in all these countries, each one of them claiming the authority of the one infallible revelation on behalf of its peculiar teaching. So, however infallible it may be, it does not carry

infallible guidance to the people who devoutly believe in it.

Not only, then, do the different Bibles of the world contradict each other, but they do not carry the same message to those that accept them.

Come now to our own Bible for the moment. Do all the people who accept the Old and New Testaments as an infallible revelation from God get the same message from and through them? We know they do not. Doctrinally, with regard to practical matters, in all sorts of ways, they differ. Here are the Baptists, for example, insisting that the Bible teaches one authoritative method of baptism; and nobody else at all agrees with them. Here are the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists and the Episcopalians, each one claiming that a certain church order is clearly revealed in the New Testament; and each one of them feels sure that he has got it and the rest have not.

Then as to matters of doctrine, in regard to the nature of man, the fall of man, the nature of Jesus, atonement, future punishment, —all sorts of problems: as many different opinions are held as there are different sects and denominations, and each one of them

appeals to the one infallible message as its authority. Something wrong somewhere. It cannot be perfectly clear.

And then another thing. Those persons who have believed—and this is true not of our Bible only, but of all Bibles—that they had an absolutely infallible book have stood square in the way of human progress, always, everywhere, and of necessity. An infallibility cannot possibly consist with free inquiry, with discovery and advance.

You remember the old Mohammedan, who said concerning the famous Alexandrian library: "If it agrees with the Koran, then we do not need it. If it does not, it is wrong, and ought to be destroyed." So he burned the thousands of volumes. This is the spirit of infallibility: nothing can be permitted that is not consistent with the book, with "my" interpretation of the book; for that, of course, is the only one that is correct. So the world must stand still where the writer of the book had stopped thinking.

Infallibility stands, then, and of necessity, in the way of all growth. It produces certain other results which are evil, and only evil, and evil continually. It cultivates spiritual conceit, superciliousness and pride. Remember

the word of the Psalmist, and see how out of it have come bitterness, hatred, and persecution in every age. The Psalmist says: "Do not I hate them that hate thee? I hate them with perfect hatred."

Queen Mary of England, popularly called the Bloody, said, "Since God is going to burn for ever the heretics in another life, it is fitting that I should imitate Him and burn them in this."

Out of this belief in "my" infallibility comes the fact that "I" cannot tolerate anybody who differs from me. And, if it is believed that I stand as sponsor for and representative of God, then I have no right to tolerate. I stand as voicing the wrath of the Almighty; and you know what that means always, always has meant, when a man has arrogated to himself that supreme position.

The spirit of the Romish Church, we say, is changed, is becoming broader and more liberal. It is—under compulsion. What did the Pope say the other day? The Duke of Norfolk, the titled leader of the Catholic faction in England, led six or eight hundred pilgrims to Rome; and the Pope, when he received them, complained, whiningly, of the fact that he was kept a captive by the secular

power and had no longer any temporal rule, and that therefore he and the Church and the truth and God were being insulted by Protestant worship springing up right there in Rome. That is the spirit of the Pope to-day—if he only had the power.

It is the spirit of all infallibilities, and of necessity must be. Infallibility has hated, has persecuted, has kindled fires, has turned the thumb-screw, has manipulated the rack, has invented all tortures, has driven believers into the wilderness, has cast them over the edge of precipices, has pursued them with the sword, has watered the streets of the Old World with blood, has lighted up the darkness of the ages with fires that would seem to have been kindled from the lower regions. This has been the result of infallible revelations. We do not need them. We thank God that in this modern world we are getting free from the superstitious belief that we have them.

Now, then, where are we in regard to this matter of God's speaking to the world? Does He not speak? Has He not spoken? I said near the beginning of this chapter that I might refer to the possibility of certain utterances of the Divine as being fixed and final. To what did I refer? I referred to such

things as these: Human experience, for example, during the progress of ages, has wrought out certain results as bearing on the treatment of the body, on moral problems, the relations of men and women to each other, on civilisation, that are practically infallible. No sane man doubts them, no lover of his kind questions their binding force. There are certain words of the Divine spoken through human experience, which are fixed and settled words. In the realms of science there are utterances of the Divine that we may consider as clear and unmistakable. Whatever is demonstrated as truth in geology, in chemistry, in astronomy, in any department of scientific study, this is infallible as far as it goes. But none of these are matters about which envy and jealousy and hatred between man and man can ever be raised.

Infallibility, then, we may find within very narrow limits, and in certain directions in these departments of human study. I may get a message from God which is practically clear and unmistakable for me, sufficient for my guidance; and yet I may not impose it on another. I am bound by my own conscience, my own conviction of what is true and right; but I have no authority to exact unquestioning

obedience to my dictum from any other human soul.

And I am under the highest of all obligations to keep my own convictions always ready for revision in the light of higher and grander truths or the results of wider human experience. But, so long as I believe that a certain thing is right, that thing I must do on peril of being false to my God and to my soul.

How does God speak, if not in an infallible way? I believe that God has spoken to men —perhaps in all the ways to which I have referred—sometime, somewhere, in the history of the world. I believe that there is many a word of God in the Bible, which I never loved so much, in which I never was so interested, as I am at this hour. I believe that God speaks to us in a thousand ways, from the heavens over our head to the earth under our feet,—that He speaks in the experiences of human lives.

Let us note a little more particularly some ways by which we may believe that He sends His messages to us even in this later day. Men have believed always that all the things that they saw, felt, did, have not originated simply in themselves. They have believed that they have been played upon like instru-

ments, sometimes by the skilful fingers of unseen personalities. They have believed that all their thoughts were not their own, all their words not their own, all their actions not their own; and these have not always been ignorant people, enthusiasts, persons not to be trusted.

Take, for example, a woman like George Eliot. She was a hard-headed woman, if ever there was one,—a woman who exacted proof. She was an agnostic, a woman not to be swept by fancy; and yet she has left it on record that she always had the feeling that the best things she wrote were somehow not entirely her own. She does not attempt to tell us where they came from.

One of the most famous preachers of the modern world—I have this on perfectly reliable authority—was sometimes known practically to fall into a trance after he had begun his sermon, and to speak without clear intellectual consciousness of what he was saying. He himself has said that, when a parishioner came to him at the close of the sermon and asked him just what he meant by this saying or that, he would be compelled to wait until after he had seen the report of his stenographer before he answered, because he was not quite

sure what he had said. And these were the days when the people clutched the seats in front of them and listened with breathless eagerness to his words.

All men who speak in public, I take it, have times when they feel as though they were somehow rapt out of and above themselves; and if you should interrupt them in the midst of their discourse, they would open their eyes, and feel as though they were dropped suddenly to a lower level. Men who speak and men who write are sometimes conscious of being lifted as if on wings, into higher ranges of atmosphere, up to heights whence they gain wider views of humanity and the universe.

The elder Dumas used frequently to be found, by a friend who called upon him, sitting at his desk, laughing with *abandon* at the keen or witty remarks of some of his own characters, as though he were hearing them and had nothing whatever to do with them himself, except to listen. In all ages of the world there has been a class of men whom we call Mystics, who have felt that they were in touch with unseen realities about them, and that they voiced wisdom and aspirations higher than they were familiar with in their normal hours.

The great men of the world have been men who, like Jesus, now and then climbed to mountain tops, and had their hours of transfiguration; and then they came down into the confusion and *mêlée* of ordinary human life, and appeared like other people.

These are undeniable experiences. What do they mean? I do not for one moment suppose that the utterances of people at these times are necessarily infallible. For you must remember that, if a wind-harp be played upon by the breeze, the music will be determined, not entirely by the character of the wind, but by the range and capacity and condition of the harp itself. So divine influences may play upon the human mind and heart; and the resulting echo will be determined, not entirely by the divine influence, but by the condition of the instrument that is touched and played upon.

Just what do I believe? For possibly I am not making myself very clear. I believe that this world of ours is immersed in a world invisible, a world as real as this, infinitely more real, if there is to be any grade and degree of reality recognised. We have learned enough about this old material universe of ours to know that the mightiest forces in it are the

invisible and intangible forces. Paul talked about running his life race in an arena, while rising about him tier on tier was a great crowd of witnesses.

I believe we fight our battle here in the presence of people we do not see. I believe, as Milton said, that

> "Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
> Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep."

We play our part here on our little stage, in the midst of a spiritual universe. It is one house, with different rooms in that house.

I believe that now and then there come to those prepared for them whispers out of this Unseen,—touches, voices, glimpses, influences. They are not infallible; but they lift us, and they make us stronger, braver, better. Here is one source of possible inspiration, though not of infallibility. For, if I can influence a friend here, I may conceivably influence that friend after I have passed into the Invisible. But, if I am not infallible now, there is no reason in the wide world why I should suppose I shall be infallible five minutes or five years after I have passed into the Unseen. Influences, inspiration then possibly, but not infallibility.

There is another source of inspiration,—the direct influence of God. What do I mean by that? I do not mean at all, for I do not believe at all, that God ever used any man since the world began as an amanuensis in the work of writing a book for Him. I do not believe that God arbitrarily selects this man or that man to be inspired; that He says, "Now here is Isaiah, and here is Paul; they two shall be inspired; and Mohammed and other people shall not." I believe nothing of the kind.

What do I believe? I believe that God is spirit, infinite, universal, and that we live and move and breathe in Him; that He is life, thought, feeling, love; that He surrounds our lives, as the air surrounds the world. But I believe that He is changeless, not arbitrary in His selection. He surrounds humanity, then, in a certain sense, if I may suggest something by a figure, as the ocean surrounds its shores. The ocean does not change its nature, but it sweeps into the Bay of Fundy, into the Mediterranean, up the mouth of a river, into a little creek or inlet, according to the capacity, the receptive power of bay, river-mouth, creek, inlet. It fills every opening full.

I believe that from the beginning of the world God has been flowing into humanity,—yea, into all lives before there was any humanity,—filling life full of Himself, just according to the capacity of that life to receive Him. God is in a grass-blade. How much of Him? All that a grass-blade will hold. God is in a pebble stone. How much of Him? All that a pebble will hold. God is in Mont Blanc. How much? All that Mont Blanc can hold and manifest of His majesty and might and His beauty and His glory. God is in a constellation. How much? All that a constellation can hold and reflect. And God is in a horse and a dog. How much? All that the horse or dog is capable of receiving. God is in the Fiji Islander. How much? All that a Fiji Islander can think and feel and express. God was in an ancient Roman as truly as in an ancient Hebrew. How much? As much as he could express.

And so, as the world has climbed up, as man has advanced in intellectual, in moral, in affectional capacity, in spiritual ability, God has come in and filled him full. Or, to put it another way, God has been the power that has developed and unfolded from within, expressing Himself just as fast and as far as hu-

manity has developed into capacity for divine expression.

That is what inspiration means, that is what the coming into us of God means. God was in Confucius, God was in Gautama, God was in Mohammed. He was in all these great men, leaders, witnesses of their ages, expressing Himself just as fully as they were capable of receiving Him and understanding Him.

Why do we to-day cling to the supreme leadership in morals and religion of the Nazarene? Because here was a soul so developed, so rounded, so clarified, that God could put more of Himself into him than perhaps into any other man that ever lived; so that we say that God shines in the face of Jesus. Nothing unnatural about it; nothing supernatural, any more than there is something supernatural in a raindrop catching as much of the sun as it can hold or the wide ocean catching a million-fold more. So God inspires and comes into us just as fast and as far as we are ready to receive Him.

And He speaks to us. As Whitman says:

"Why should I wish to see God better than this day?
I see something of God each hour of the twenty-four,
each moment then;

In the faces of men and women I see God, and in my own face in the glass ;

"I find letters from God dropt in the street—and every one is signed by God's name,
And I leave them where they are, for I know that wheresoe'er I go,
Others will punctually come forever and forever."[1]

To the person who can see, God shows Himself ; to the person who can feel, He is manifested, as you reach out and touch the hem of His garment ; to the one who can appreciate beauty, God comes in all His beauty ; to one who can appreciate the exactness of mathematics and their relation to the order of the universe, God is apprehended mathematically. As Kepler said, "O God, I think over again Thy thoughts after Thee." Not infallible ; but he saw that God had been there, and he traced His footsteps.

And so in every direction, whatever our peculiar capacity may be, we see and feel and hear and touch God. It would be a pity, indeed, if the modern world were poorer in revelation than the ancient. I do not know whether I shall shock you when I say that a large part of our Bible, except for critical and historical purposes, is not worth a great deal to-day. We have other books that

are more the word of God than the most of Kings and Chronicles and Esther and Ezekiel and Jeremiah and the Epistles of Peter and Jude. Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning, Longfellow, Lowell, Whittier, Whitman, Ruskin, Carlyle, Emerson, Thoreau,—a dozen writers of the last century have larger, higher, deeper, wider inspirations of God than half of the Bible contains; and why not?

Has God been hiding Himself since two or three thousand years ago? Has He had nothing to say to the modern world? Has He entered into no brain, no heart, no life, since the time of Paul? What, then, has Christianity meant,—the Christianity which is the blossoming, unfolding of a divine life, ever growing wider and finer and sweeter as the centuries go by? I believe that there never was a time since the old world swung in the blue when there was so much of God in humanity, so much of love, of tenderness, of pity, helpfulness, care, and devotion, so much of everything divine as there is here, this moment, in London, in New York.

This means an ever-widening revelation, the evolution, the unfolding, of the Divine within the sphere of the human. So remember that, if you listen, you can hear. If you

do not hear, never dare to think that there is not a voice. If you reach out your hand and it is sensitive, you can feel. If you do not, never dare to say God is not there. If you love, you will thrill to the pulse-throb of the infinite love. If hate is in your heart, do not dare to say there is no love in the universe. It is full of God: only listen, only feel, only look, only ask that a glimpse may be vouchsafed to you.

Let Lowell tell us this deep spiritual truth:

"God is not dumb, that He should speak no more;
If thou hast wanderings in the wilderness
And find'st not Sinai, 't is thy soul is poor;
There towers the mountain of the Voice no less,
Which whoso seeks shall find; but he who bends,
Intent on manna still and mortal ends,
Sees it not, neither hears its thundered lore.

"Slowly the Bible of the race is writ,
And not on paper leaves nor leaves of stone;
Each age, each kindred, adds a verse to it,
Texts of despair or hope, of joy or moan.
While swings the sea, while mists the mountains shroud,
While thunder's surges burst on cliffs of cloud,
Still at the prophets' feet the nations sit."

VI

GODS AND GOD

AS the world grows, idols are for ever passing away; but God abides, and becomes ever more and more. It is not always true that idols have been made of wood, of stone, of some kind of metal. More commonly they have been made of thoughts, imaginings, wrought out by the hands of ignorance and fear; and these have been the most hideous and cruel of them all.

The boy who lives in the home with his father, and sees him every day, does not have, when he is a boy, any adequate, any complete idea of his father. His conception of him is determined, not by what the father is so much as by what the boy is. He thinks as well as he can; but his thinking is determined by his intellectual, his moral, his affectional nature; and the thinking will change as the months and the years go by, though the father may remain substantially the same.

And the boy frequently estimates his father by something which the father cares least about, something which does not at all essentially touch what he is in the community or as a part of the great world. As, for example, the boy may be proud of his father chiefly because he is tall or is an athlete—not at all appreciating his qualities of heart or head. And not only do these thoughts of the boy change concerning his father, but, if there are three or four or a half-dozen boys in the same family, they may all have widely divergent conceptions of the same one father, the man whom they see and touch and love.

Is it strange, then, that the world, as it has grown from childhood towards a manhood not even yet attained, should have divergent, contradictory conceptions concerning the one Father in heaven, whom, in one sense, no man hath seen or can see? Is it strange that different nations, differently born, trained, surrounded, leading different kinds of lives, should have differing ideals of the Divine? And is it strange that, as the world grows, the old conceptions of God are outgrown and left behind? Would we have it otherwise if we could?

We need to run over for a moment what

all intelligent people are, in the main, very familiar with,—some of the steps of the world's growth in its thought concerning God.

At the beginning, or as near the beginning as we are able to penetrate by our studies, polytheism existed all over the face of the earth, of necessity, There was no possibility of anything like monotheism in that stage of human culture. As men looked abroad over what they knew of the heavens and the earth, they had no conception, and at that time could have had no conception, of any unity in it at all. And they had no conception, and could have had no conception, of any force except such as they were conscious of,—will force. So that the powers manifested in the heavens above and on the earth around them seemed to them separate individualities, and seemed to them alive.

Why not? How could it have been otherwise? We need not stop to note at any length a discussion still going on as to whether early man's belief in the gods sprang from ghost worship, ancestor worship, or whether man, apart from this, exercised his power of personifying natural objects and forces, and thinking them living and distinct beings. It may be there is a measure of truth in both these

theories. At any rate, it is not specially important for us; and we may leave it to be settled by the persons engaged in research in that department of human study.

At any rate man believed in a multiplicity of gods; the sun, the moon, the stars, the winds, the clouds, the lightning, the mountains, the rivers, the brooks,—all these different manifestations of what we think of to-day as the one life were then so many distinct living individuals. Or, if you choose to put it another way, there were distinct, individual spirits in all these.

There was no difficulty at that time in the history of the world in accounting for either good or evil. The things that people liked, and which, therefore, they thought of as good, were the result of the activities of the friendly —and, therefore, good—deities. The things which they did not like, which hurt, which produced unhappiness, they thought of as the result of the hostility of evil deities,—deities, at any rate, hostile in their attitude towards them.

But by and by this stage of thought—not being in its nature permanent, because it was not true—began to pass away; and men in certain parts of the world became henotheists,

—that is, they believed still in many gods, but believed that they must worship one god, their god. The Jews, for example, worshipped Jehovah. They did not doubt the existence of Dagon, the god of the Philistines; but they must worship and be loyal to their god. Just as to-day a German in Europe does not doubt the existence of the czar or of King Edward VII., of the king of Italy or of Austria; but he must be loyal to the kaiser. The kaiser is his king or emperor.

This was the state of thought in regard to the unseen powers that were supposed to govern the world. But by and by another step in advance was taken; and we find some of the old prophets declaring with emphasis that there is only one living and real God, and that all the gods of the nations are idols, created either out of thoughts or some material.

But, when this stage of growth was reached, it was only on the part of the Jews, of the Arabians, of a few people; and the classic nations of antiquity still believed in a multiplicity of deities or they believed in none at all. For Greece and Rome at last came to this point: the gods were outgrown, and no new ones came to take their places. Intellectually,

Cæsar could not believe in Jupiter and the gods of the poets. He was too wise, too sensible a man. Cicero could not. Socrates could not believe in the gods of Greece. So they became, according to the popular ideals of the time, atheists; and they had to be, because they were sensible and thoughtful.

Not only that, but they outgrew the gods morally. The time came when in Greece and Rome the average citizen of Athens or of Rome was better than the gods. They could not believe in them; they could not worship such ideals.

What was the result? We find Lucretius, just before the birth of Christ, the philosophical poet, trying to get along in the universe without any god, trying to frame a theory of things that did not need any god. This is a stage of human growth, I suppose, that almost every great, thoughtful nation has passed through. And you will note how necessary it is. The old conceptions of the gods are consecrated in the popular religion, and it is irreligious and atheistic to doubt them; and yet men become too wise and too good to believe in them any longer. And so this conflict arises. And, until the old gods are superseded by better, there is a period of interregnum, when

there is no god at all for the clear-sighted, earnest, honest man.

The Jews were monotheists. From them we inherited our Christian monotheism; and, as we have already seen, having adopted the old Hebrew Scriptures as an infallible revelation from God, there is no science in early Christianity. For a thousand years we accepted substantially the Old Testament monotheism, wrought over as the result of Greek speculation into the Christian Trinity. They told us that it did not destroy the monotheism, this making a Trinity out of the nature of God; and they tried hard in their definitions to avoid tritheism.

But the time came when the intellectual advance of man outgrew the Christian conception of God that had been dominant during the first thousand years of Christian history. For we must remember that the thought of God goes along with the thought of the universe. God to the Christians of the first millennium was not at all the God that we have in our minds to-day. He was an outlined, individualised being, sitting on a throne in a heaven just a little way above the blue. He could be found and seen with such eyes as we possess if we could only attain to that

heaven. The universe was small and contracted as compared with our modern conception of it. God ruled the world arbitrarily. He was not in the universe in the sense in which we think of Him to-day.

But by and by, at the time of the Renaissance, other thoughts were born, new conceptions of the universe began to take possession of the human mind. New conceptions of God of necessity followed these new conceptions of the universe, and men began to occupy the position in modern times that Lucretius did in ancient Rome. Atheism, or at least agnosticism, came to be popular on the part of some of the clearest-headed thinkers of the world.

Why? Is it strange? The old conception of the universe had been outgrown; and yet it was consecrated as a part of the religion. The intellectual conception of God had been outgrown; and yet it was consecrated as a part of the religion. Not only the intellectual thought of the universe, and of God: man morally outgrew his God. So that the people who revolted at the time of the Renaissance were not only clearer-headed than those who had thought out the old conceptions, but they were nobler-hearted;

and they could not worship the conception of God which was embodied and enshrined in all the creeds, and set up as the object of adoration over all the altars. And so for a time many of the nobler spirits of the world passed through a phase of unbelief, many of them dying in that unbelief, because they could not clearly see their way to any higher or finer conception of things.

So in the modern world. We have had attempts, many on the part of noble men, to frame a conception of the universe that requires no god. Men have said, speaking as scientists: "God is an unnecessary hypothesis: we can get along in our theories without Him." But, though for a time the head may get along without any god, the heart finds it more difficult: it does not rest content in unbelief; it cannot look abroad over the wide spaces of the universe and contentedly feel that all is blank and empty air. Being appalled, it longs for a father, some one to trust, some one to love.

Let us frankly admit that it is just as easy to imagine the material universe self-existent and eternal as it is to imagine God self-existent and eternal. The difficulty is not there. The problem arises when we look this

universe in the face, and try to find its essential meaning. And I believe that, as the result of the deepest search and scrutiny, we are coming to find more and more that the meaning of it is divine.

Let me ask you to think for a moment. Suppose we wake up as for the first time, and look abroad over the earth and into the heavens. If the knowledge that has come to the modern world could be ours, we should find what? First, that here is not only myself, but here is a power not myself, outside of myself, a power that was here before I was born, a power that will be here after I have died, a power that has produced me,—therefore, my Father, on any theory I choose to hold of it or Him. Here, then, first, is a power, a power unlimited, so far as we can imagine or dream. It is practically omnipotent.

What else? This power manifests itself as a universal order. There is no chaos. Neither the microscope nor the telescope has yet been able to find any part of the universe that is in disorder. Order everywhere.

What next? Intelligence. For we cannot imagine that which is intelligible to be other than the manifestation of intelligence.

What next? Is this power personal,—that

is, the power outside of us? It is, at least, by the most rigid scientific reasoning, as much as a person. I am a person. You are a person. Millions of personalities exist; and there cannot be evolved anything which was not at first involved. A stream cannot rise higher than its source. The cause must at least be equal to and adequate to the result. That which has produced and which manifests itself in personalities must be at least as much as personal.

Is this power conscious? We are conscious. That which has produced us must be then as much as conscious. As Herbert Spencer said to me one day in conversation on this matter, "There is no reason why we should not think of the Eternal Power as being as much above and beyond what we mean by personality and consciousness as we are above and beyond vegetable growths." This is not, as you see, a negative, but a grandly positive statement. This Eternal Power may be above and beyond what we mean by personality and consciousness; that is, personal and conscious in some grander way than we can now or as yet imagine.

Is this power good? Did you ever stop to think of one thing? There is no necessary,

no essential evil in all the world. There are only two ways by which evil was ever wrought, or ever can be wrought. Evil is either the perverted use of some power which is in itself good, or it is the excessive use of some power which in itself is good. There is no conceivable way of working evil, except by one of these two; and this means that the things, the persons, which do evil are not essentially evil. So there is no essential evil in the universe; and that means that at the heart of it the universe is good.

I had occasion in a previous chapter to make a statement which I wish to recall to you,—that, analysing it with care and in the light of what science has taught us of the nature of things, necessary pain is good, not evil. What we call evil, as I have just said, does not really exist as an entity. Sorrow, separation, those things that trouble us here, even death itself are not essentially, not necessarily evil at all. It is very easy to prove, I think, that this is the best conceivable of all worlds. Ignorance is only the natural and necessary process through which we pass in becoming learned. Evil is only the natural and necessary stage through which we pass in coming into conscious personal

goodness. Pain and sorrow are bound up of necessity with the lives of sentient beings, —are no permanent, no eternal part of things.

So, I believe, we are ready to say, on the basis of the clearest thought and the most cogent scientific reasoning, that this power outside of ourselves is not only power, but personality, intelligence, consciousness, goodness, and love.

Is it one power? Herbert Spencer again has said—I speak of him simply because he is as competent a spokesman for modern science as any man living—that the existence of an Eternal Power back of all phenomena is the one most certain item of all our knowledge. If we do not know anything else, we know this,—that there is an Eternal Power back of all that is manifested, and that this power is that in which all the divergent manifestations of the universe find their unity.

Modern science has proved that all the forces of the world are only varieties and manifestations of one force. Now, then, are we not ready to say we believe, and we have a right to believe, in God, and that God is love? By this I would not have you think of God as an outlined being away off somewhere on some distant planet or world, a

being that we could get nearer to than we are already if we could only travel fast enough or in the right direction. For this thought of God is one of the idols which is destined of necessity to pass away.

Where is God? They used to think of Him as just above the blue dome; but that blue dome has faded into space, as the result of modern investigation. The nearest star to us after we leave our solar system is so far away that it takes light between three and four years to come to us from it: that is our next-door neighbour. The next one, I think, is so far away that it takes six or seven years. Where shall we look for the centre of the universe on which to erect the throne of God? If we seek for the centre of a universe that seems to us, so far as we know, infinite in extent, we must put God in that sense so far away that we should be practically lost in the deeps of space.

Where is God? God is nearer to us than He ever was in all the thought of the world before. God is here, always here, always all here. Does that seem incomprehensible mystery? Let me, in the use of an illustration which I may have used before, try to suggest that it is no more mysterious than anything

else is mysterious. We sometimes delude ourselves by imagining that, when we have labelled a thing which we have seen a great many times, we know it, and have divested it of its mystery. We have seen flowers, grass-blades, and pebble-stones ever since we were children. Can you explain either one of them for me? Whichever one you look at, if you ask a few questions about it and try to trace its meaning, you find yourself face to face with the Infinite; as Tennyson has expressed it in that beautiful little fragment of his about the "Flower in the Crannied Wall." Explain that to me, and I will explain to you what God is, what man is.

Let us take, then, a familiar illustration, that I may suggest to you that the mystery of God's omnipresence is not more mysterious than something we are daily familiar with. Where are you? Did anybody ever see you? You are not your body. What has anybody seen when he has looked at you? Seen a face, clothes, certain outlines of a figure; but, if he had seen the whole body, would he have seen you? You are not the body. You inhabit the body for a time; you wear it, you use it; but you are something else than the body.

Where are you? In the body, you say. Though this mysterious something we call our thought can circle the earth quicker than the electric forces can do it, and commune with the stars at the same time that it is here. But where are you? Did anybody ever see you? No. Nobody ever will see you; you are as invisible as God is. In what part of your body are you? You are omnipresent in your body as much as God is omnipresent in the universe. When you are looking, for all practical purposes you are in the eyes; when you are clasping the hand of a friend, you are in that hand-clasp; when you are running on some errand of mercy or business, you are, for all practical purposes, in the feet. You are wherever a special activity of your personality is called for. When you speak, you are in this invisible air, being shaped to words on the tip of your tongue and by your teeth. You are omnipresent in your body; you are invisible.

Let that figure of speech suggest to us a mystery indeed, but no profounder mystery concerning God. The modern thought of God is that He is in and through the universe, which is no longer a mechanism, but has become an organism. The universe was not made: it

grew, just as you were not made, but grew; and God is the mind, the heart, the life, the love that makes the universe the body of the living divinity.

God, then, is omnipresent. He is in the flower when that flower is unfolding. He is in a nebula when it is cohering to an orb and is in the process of creating a sun. He is wherever there is activity going on; and all of Him that is needed is wherever the special activity is going on. And as we know, from the farthest electric throb of the most distant star to the tiniest movement of a grain of sand in the street, that all is thrilling and moving with tireless and eternal life, so we know that God is everywhere, is omnipresent. Thus this great, this overwhelming conception, is becoming real to the modern world, is being seen to be rational, something we can gain at least a glimpse of and partly comprehend.

This, then, is our modern thought of God; and the old ideas concerning Him are passing away. I wish to suggest to you now that this process of passing away is all round us, in all the churches, and is as yet very far from being complete. In one sense,—and, I beg you to understand the sense in which I mean it,—we do not to-day worship the God of Abraham, of

Isaac, or of Jacob. We do not worship the God of Samuel or of Elijah, or of any of the prophets. We do not worship the God of Paul. We do not worship the God of Leo X. or of Pope Sixtus IV., after whom the Sistine Chapel was named. We do not worship the God of the reformers, Luther or Calvin. We do not worship the God of Whitefield, or of Wesley, or of Edwards, or of Finney, or of Moody.

Note, I believe that all these men,—and truer, nobler, souls than some of them, in spite of certain things I am going to say, have never lived on the face of the earth,—these men saw God the best they knew. And in one sense, in the real and true sense, they were feeling after the real God as much as are we; but they suffered the limitations of their time, their traditions, and their training,—the intellectual limitations, the moral limitations,—and they could not think clearly and nobly of Him who is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The God of the Methodist Book of Discipline, the God of the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, the God of most of the old creeds, the God of the Episcopal Prayer-book, the intellectual conception of God, I mean, which is outlined in these, is not the God that

the best men and women, even in those churches to-day, are worshipping.

Just as the old conception of the universe has been outgrown and is passing away, so the old intellectual conceptions of God are being intellectually outgrown, and are passing away. We do not think of Him any more under the concepts that we used to hold.

But not only that: we are outgrowing the elder ideals morally. I said above that the average citizen of ancient Athens and ancient Rome was better than the gods whose worship he had inherited. So I say now, simply, directly, deliberately, that the average man in New York to-day is better than the conception of God, as outlined by either of the great men to whom I have referred. The God of the great creeds is morally outgrown. They said He was good, but He was not. For, as they went on to define Him, they contradicted the assertion of the goodness, and inserted into their creeds statements about Him which the hearts of His children are coming to regard as libels and to protest against for the sake of the love and honour that are borne Him.

When in early Christianity they deified Jesus, in one sense they did something sweeter and finer than they knew; for what has been

the result of it? There was a movement for a time, and it partially succeeded, to make over the noble, sweet, tender Nazarene into the repulsive image of the God they worshipped and whom they referred to as his Father. But the result of it has been that Jesus, the tender, loving, gentle Nazarene, has transformed and made over the conception of the God. And men have come to feel and to say, God must be, at least, as good as Jesus was.

The Jehovah of the Old Testament was not as good: he was jealous; he was partial; he was cruel; he indorsed all sorts of things that we morally repudiate and hate to-day. The God of Elijah, the God of Paul, was not as good as Jesus. The God of Pope Leo X., the God of Luther and Calvin, was not as good. The God of Moody and the great modern revivalists was not nearly as good as Jesus.

Run over in your mind the ideal of Jesus,—the gentle, the tender, forgiving his enemies, saying, "They know not what they do"; tolerant of the ignorant and weak; eating with publicans and sinners; forgiving the woman who had gone astray, and telling those who were without sin to cast the first stone. He was ideal in his sweetness and his love, and yet unflinching in his adhesion to the truth.

This was the historic reality of Jesus. But, as the years went by, they tried to make of him a judge, and to represent him as casting all his enemies into an eternal hell. But from before his gentle face all those barbaric horrors are fleeing away, as the clouds and the mists flee at the coming up of the sun.

So Jesus, the tender, ideal, perfect humanity, is coming to give us our conception of God. We must think of God, if He is worthy of our worship at all, as being utterly flawless. He must be perfect, or we cannot believe in Him. So He is coming to be, at last, all these things which we can dream. The old partial conceptions of Him are passing away; they are being quietly laid one side, so far as practical use is concerned, even though they still remain imbedded, like old-time fossils, in the creeds. So God is coming to be perfect, to be love. The divided universe, half of which belonged to the devil, we can no longer tolerate. As Tennyson says:

"The God of love and of hell together — He cannot be thought!
If there be *such* a god, may the *great* God curse him and bring him to naught."

Now, then, as we go out over the world, engaged in our business or our pleasure, we are

not orphans, we are not alone. Our God is not even away off somewhere in space: He is here. It was God who held the worlds in their orbits last night while we slept. It was God who turned our old planet until by and by the part of it where we were came into the light of the morning sun; and it was dawn. It was God who waked us out of our sleep; it was God whose loving and universal care fed us; it was God who was watching us, who folded us in His arms and guarded us.

And now, as we turn and go about our occupations, no matter what business we are engaged in, it is God's power we are using to carry that business on,— God in our minds, bodies, hearts, consciousnesses, leading us in the ways that are right; God moving our machinery for us, whether it is electricity, steam, or water power. Whatever it is, it is the manifestation of the tireless life and force of God, our Father. If there is any beauty, of a flower, in a child's face, wonder in the eyes of some one we love, there is God. Wherever there is light, it is God, the power; wherever there is order, it is God, the law; wherever there is majesty, as in the mountains, it is God, thrilling and lifting us; God in the infinite variety, the rhythm, and movement, the tire-

less uplift and sink of the sea; God in the air, cooling, disinfecting, cleansing, healing,—God everywhere.

Duty, truth, love, power, care, helpfulness, pity, inspiration, aspiration,—"in Him we live and move and have our being." The world is no longer secular for six days and sacred the seventh. If we understand it, it is all sacred. We are always in the presence of God, and, wherever we are, we may kneel and be in the innermost sanctuary of His temple. God is our Father, and God is love.

VII

SAVIOURS

ALL nations, all religions, have had their saviours. But as we study them, we find that the beliefs concerning what men need to be saved from, and how this salvation is to be accomplished, have been widely divergent. We find still further that, even in the same religion concerning the same supposed saviour, the same ideal has not continued. The thought of the people has changed concerning the nature, the office, the work of the saviour, in accordance with the intellectual, moral, and spiritual development of the people. We shall find this point clearly illustrated when a little later we come to consider what people have believed concerning Jesus.

From the beginning of the world, as men have looked over human life, the evils that afflict us have been patent and observable. Men have suffered from physical pain; they have had mental sorrows. There have been

hunger and want of every kind,—disease, vice, crime, death. These have always existed; and men have always of necessity had some theory in the light of which they have tried to account for them.

It is inevitable that men should have asked: "Why do I suffer? Why do pain and sorrow and moral evil, want and vice and crime, exist?" And, when we consider the mental condition of early men, the answer which they gave to their own questions was the most natural one in the world; and yet it was a magical, a supernatural answer. Men believed, and they could not have believed otherwise, that they were surrounded on every hand by invisible beings who were able to help or hurt them as they pleased. And they have supposed that these beings were some of them friendly, some of them hostile, some of them perhaps fickle and changeable, now on good terms with them and now opposed, according to conditions. And they have believed that all these evils were brought upon them by these invisible powers.

A study of early man, for example, shows us what we should not have supposed before that study,—that death itself even has never been regarded as a natural thing. It has been hard

for men to believe that they must die. And, when a man has died, instead of supposing that it was the necessary result of some inevitable, natural cause, they have always believed that some enemy has killed him. If that enemy was not visible, then invisible,—some spiritual being. This in illustration of the universal fact that they have attributed the existence of all these evils to hostile spirits in the Unseen.

Now you will readily see that the method by which they would attempt to be free from these evils would naturally be determined by their theory as to the cause of them. They were caused by the enmity of invisible beings. The thing to do then, of course, is to win the friendship, the good-will, of these invisible people.

No other method would even occur to them; for they knew nothing of what we mean by nature, natural forces, natural laws. How, then, would they proceed? Naturally, they would procced as we know they did. They attempted to bring to these invisible beings such offerings as they supposed they would desire, that they might win their regard. And the first great want of man—pressing upon him with a force in those early times that it is impossible for us now to conceive—was the

satisfaction of hunger. And we know that they believed that these invisible spirits needed food. They ate the spiritual counterpart of the visible thing which was the supply of their own needs. And so modern research has revealed to us—what has been known but for a little while—that the earliest idea of sacrifice was that of a common meal partaken of by the god and his worshippers together. They brought some animal, sacrificed it, poured out the blood upon the altar ; and it was believed that the god communed with them as a partaker in this common meal.

And just as you find among the Arabs, for example, to-day, that, if they have eaten with even an enemy, they feel held in bonds of amity for at least a time, so it was supposed by these early ancestors of ours that when they ate with the god, it was a sacrament by which they were bound to obedience and service ; and the god was equally bound to friendship and protection. This was the early idea of sacrifice.

But change comes over all these ideas as men themselves change and develop. So by and by, instead of its being simply a common meal, it was a gift to the god ; and they came not only to bring him food, but anything else which they supposed he might desire. And

then there entered in at last, not simply the offering of a gift, but the sacrificial idea. It was a victim, offered to please or placate the supposed anger of the invisible Being; and, naturally, this underwent a transformation until people came to feel that the finer, the more precious the victim, the more power over the invisible deities. And so there arose not only the offering of food, gifts of one kind and another, not only the slaying of animals, but human sacrifice,—not originating, as you might suppose, in human cruelty, but simply in the desire of the worshipper to bring to his god the most precious victim that he could imagine, supposing thus that he would obtain special favour from the deity.

We find this illustrated in that wonderful poem of Tennyson's, "The Victim." There is an effort on the part of the priests to find out which is dearer to the king, the wife or their son; for the dearest must be slain. And at last he shows such devoted love for his wife that the priests make up their mind that she is the more precious offering, and seize upon her and offer her to the gods. So the idea of human sacrifice arose out of this thought that, the more precious the victim, the more power over the god. So in every nation all over the

world you will find sacrificed saviours. Our own Christ is not by any means the only one. In ancient India, Krishna and Vishnu; in ancient Greece, Prometheus; in Egypt, Osiris; in countries of this world, among the primitive peoples here on this new continent, everywhere, out of the same natural ideas have sprung this natural growth.

Not only human sacrifices, but by and by, in the case of Prometheus, Osiris, and Vishnu, divine or semi-divine beings offered, sometimes to appease the wrath of the gods, sometimes a willing victim, testifying to the love of him who was thus devoted to humanity.

But by and by, as civilisation advances, ideas of this sort are more or less outgrown; and we see the great religions of the world develop. Among the people, in the popular religions, we see all these ideas which I have spoken of still holding the imaginations of the heart, but at the same time philosophical schemes as to the meaning of the universe, the origin, and condition of man, and his needs, growing up. As, for instance,—merely to point them out as I pass,—in China we find the work of Confucius. Confucious does not claim to know anything about the gods or any other world. He says frankly: "Why, when I do not know the mean-

ing of this, should I try to explain any other?" But he teaches that men are naturally good, and that it is only conditions, environments, that call out and develop evil in them. So, he says, if we only have before us fine models, if we keep alive the traditions of the heroes and noble ones of the past, and imitate them, the ills of the world will be done away.

We find Gautama, the Buddha, reforming, or attempting to reform the pre-existing conditions in India; and he teaches that these evils are incidental, and necessarily incidental, to any human, finite life. We are doomed to be reborn over and over and over again,—committed to this endless circle of births, and, consequently, suffering. And the cause of it is human desire. So the way to escape is to quench desire. Thus he advises putting people through a discipline of moral goodness and of ascetic development, so that by and by they will outgrow the necessity of being born again, and will enter Nirvana. This is Gautama's salvation.

Mohammed originates his great religion,—which is making conquests to-day in some parts of the earth quite as rapidly as Christianity,—and he teaches that, if we only believe the short creed, "Allah is Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet" and go through the routine and

services,—committing to memory certain parts of the Scriptures regarded as so sacred that that alone is sometimes enough to constitute salvation,—then humanity will outgrow all its suffering and sorrows.

So we see over the earth men speculating as to what shall be done to overcome the evils of the world. And religions are not done being born yet, if we can judge by the recent cults. In Syria to-day, one has assumed the title of the Bab, the Gate, the Opening, the Entrance; and some of our Americans have become believers in this new religion, and are trying to propagate it here in the City of New York.

Mormonism and Christian Science show that out of this seething heart and imagination and hope and fear and love of man may be expected to come still new religions in the future. They all have for their one object to save men from suffering, from disease, from evil of every kind.

Let us turn and consider for a little our own Christian Saviour,—the evolution and change of the thoughts which have been held concerning him. In order to understand it, we must go back to Hebrew times. The early Hebrews held substantially the same ideas of the gods and of sacrifice, even human sacrifice, that

prevailed among other peoples. But, as they came to devote themselves more and more to the worship of their own peculiar god, they entertained the idea that they were the chosen people of this god. They believed this before they became monotheists. And since he was the mightiest god that there was in existence, they, as his chosen people, would ultimately be set on high among the nations of the earth.

You see the inevitable logic: Our god is greater than any other god. He has chosen us, and our prosperity comes from the patronage and care of this invisible being. Therefore, success, conquest, power over all the nations, must be ours. That was the logic.

Out of this idea, as the years went by, sprung their anticipation of a Messiah. Their monarchy was short-lived; but David and the glory of his reign came to be the type of all that was grand in the way of earthly rule. So they could not believe that their god was to desert them permanently. Thus, when they were carried off into captivity, it was only as punishment for their sins, and, when they became good enough, when they kept the law carefully enough, then the deliverer, the Saviour, was to appear. So grew up their anticipation of a Messiah, some one born as a

descendant of David, who was to come and rule the world, and set them on high among the peoples.

But this kingdom as it was to be held by them was an earthly kingdom. They did not put it off in the skies. It was to be here, among men. Its capital was to be Jerusalem, which was to them the centre of the earth.

But he did not come. In the period just preceding the birth of Jesus the air was full of expectation. There were Christs many, "Christ," as you know, being only the Greek form of the Hebrew "Messiah"; and anticipation was rife, and they were looking on every hand. Then came the gentle Nazarene who did not claim to be the Messiah. He did claim to teach a reform in the national religion. He did claim to speak for the universal Fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man. He did speak of God's readiness, His willingness, to forgive and fold to His loving heart all the erring children of the world. And he taught that love for God and love for man was the one cure for all the evils of the world; and he is the first great teacher in history who did put forth these ideals as the sufficient means by which the world might be saved. This was the life-work of Jesus.

But the people were not ready for him; and, when he spoke against the temple, when he touched the self-love and pride of the popular party, when he discredited their sacrifices, when he said that the publican who truly repented of his sin and proposed to do right was better than the most exact keeper of the law, he cut across all their prejudices; and they would have none of him. And when they understood that he preached against the temple, and when they saw that the people followed after him, so that there might be danger of complications with the dominant power of Rome, they cried, "Away with him!" And he was taken out to the little hill beyond the walls of the city, and hung upon a tree, and crucified. This was Jesus.

I do not believe that Jesus claimed ever to be the Messiah that the Jewish people expected. I cannot go into this in detail at this time; but we know,—we do not guess,—we know that the New Testament has been changed in many places and ways, as the popular belief concerning the nature and work of Jesus changed, until many a word is put upon his lips which there is no good reason to suppose he ever uttered.

Jesus, then, after he went away or during

the latter part of his ministry before he died, came to be looked upon by a party as the possible Messiah they had been expecting. He did not, indeed, do what they supposed the Messiah was to accomplish; but they thought perhaps it was only postponed, that he was going to do it, and so they clung to the belief that he was the Messiah who was to come. But it was no part of their creed that the Messiah should be put to an ignominious death; and we know from the records that the disciples, after the crucifixion, were disheartened and scattered. The two on the way to Emmaus, say: "We trusted that this had been he who was to have redeemed Israel." But that trust is broken and destroyed.

But the love and reverence for him had entered into the hearts of those who stood closest to him; and, as they thought the matter over, they perhaps quite unconsciously began to reinterpret the Messianic hope. The idea sprung up that he had simply gone into the heavens for a little while and that he was coming back again to establish the Messianic kingdom here on the earth. If you will read the New Testament with that thought in mind, you will find it all on tiptoe with expectation of what is called the second coming of Jesus: and the

words are put upon the lips of Jesus himself, the definite statement that he was to return before that generation had passed away.

And then they began to wonder why he was allowed to be put to death; and the old paganism of their past—the paganism of the Old World—swept over their thoughts, and the idea took possession of them that he was a sacrificial victim, not merely a natural human martyr, the Son of God and the Son of Man, dying as thousands have died for His great truth, but that he was a victim, a divinely appointed victim, and that he suffered and died —not lived and taught—to save the world.

And what did they suppose he was to save men from, and how was it to be explained? Now here is the point I referred to near the beginning, when I said I should indicate the changes which pass over the minds of people concerning the same one saviour. For hundreds of years—to answer the question I have just raised—it was popularly believed that Jesus was the price that God paid to the devil, who had become the rightful owner and ruler of men. He paid him to the devil's vindictiveness and vengeance, that He might redeem those who were in the infernal keeping in the lower regions. This was the popular belief.

Then it was believed that he died to appease the anger of God. God was angry with men on account of Adam's sin and fall. That idea, heathenish, pagan, abominable beyond all words to express, has been held by modern theologians. The idea was that on account of the one transgression of Adam, men became tainted, corrupted sinners the moment they breathe, and that God is angry with them, and that that anger burns with unquenchable flames down into hell and into an eternity of torture. Dr. W. G. T. Shedd who died not long ago, has a sermon the title of which carries the whole idea,—"Sin a Nature, and that Nature Guilt." Thus the new-born babe is a guilty sinner, deserving eternal hell. So Christ died as a victim to appease the wrath of the Father.

Then about the tenth century Anselm wrote a book in which he put forth what is known as the governmental theory. Christ died not as a price paid to the devil, not to appease God, but to meet a governmental exigency. God wanted to be just, but could not unless somebody suffered. So Jesus was offered as a divine victim to satisfy the supposed justice of God, and make it possible for the Father to forgive.

Then there was another theory,—that he

died and went down into hell so as to suffer the exact amount of agony that all the souls that were to be saved would have had to suffer throughout all eternity. So he became a substitute for human sufferings; and those who believed on him and accepted him as such might possibly be saved and go to heaven. These theories have been followed in the modern world by the doctrine which is most popular now among the liberal orthodox, —the belief that Jesus suffered and died to manifest the love of God, not to change Him, but to teach men how much God loved them and how ready He was to forgive.

So you see that the theories held in any one religion concerning the same saviour change as men grow and become more civilised. The old barbaric conceptions die hard, but they have to die when men get so that they can endure them no longer.

Now I wish you to carefully note what Jesus himself said. He says nothing about his death as a price paid to the devil; nothing about it as appeasing the wrath of God; nothing about any governmental exigency that needed to be met; nothing about any substitutional theory; not even anything about any moral theory such as Dr. Bushnell advocated.

He sums up his attitude, officially, once and forever, in that marvellous parable of the Prodigal Son. He does not think there is any gulf between God and His children, no wrath that needs to be appeased, no devil lurking in the background to be paid his price, no substitution. The father yearns for and loves his boy, no matter how sinful he is, away off in the far country ; and when the boy rises and says, "I will go home to my father," the father does not say : "Well, what offering are you going to bring ? How are you going to appease my wrath ?" He does not say, "the family government will go all to pieces if I forgive you without somebody suffering." He does not say anything. Only the moment he sees him a great way off, he runs to him, and falls on his neck and kisses him, and then makes a feast in the gladness of his heart, because he is come back again.

That is the official teaching of Jesus as to the attitude of God towards his erring, sinful children.

If Jesus had known anything about these theological schemes, if he had known they were true, then was the place and then was the time for him to tell us of it ; for, if he did not tell us, he was misleading us, misrepresenting God

in what was the one most vital thing in human life. This then is the theory of Jesus concerning salvation.

Now we are ready to note that this evolution of human thought and feeling is perfectly natural, when we consider how man starts in this world, inexperienced, and having to learn the facts about the universe and human nature by centuries of study and discovery. But we have made discoveries in this modern world which account simply, adequately, naturally, justly, for the facts of human life, and for our modern interpretation of those facts in the way of what is needed for human salvation.

What do we know? We know that man has never fallen. We know that this world has never been invaded by any malign spiritual power from outside. We know that the devil and all his hosts are the creation of the barbaric imagination. We know that there is no gulf between God and His world—His children—that needs to be supernaturally bridged. We know there is no divine wrath against His children. We know that this world, in the main, is just what God intended it to be in process of development towards something else. All these things we know.

Now what are the facts concerning man's

condition,—the evils from which he needs to be delivered? Man is ignorant, of necessity. God could not suddenly create a wise man if he tried; because what we mean by wisdom, by knowledge, is the summed up results of human experience, to be obtained in no other way. Infinite power has nothing to do with creating an absurdity, with doing that which, in the nature of things, cannot be done. Man is ignorant, then; and he needs to know.

Another thing, man starts in life with all the inheritance of the animal world—the snake, the tiger, the hyena, all the lower animal forces and forms—surging up in his lower nature and aspiring to take command of him. He is dowered with a divine power that, in the process of ages, sloughs off and leaves behind the animal, and climbs up into heart and brain and soul. Man, then, has this animal nature which he needs to master and control; for there is nothing, mark you, in the animal part of man that is not in its nature and essence right. It simply needs to be dominated and used, and not abused.

Man, then, is selfish, filled with greed and desire to obtain things; and it is perfectly right he should be. All growth comes from the fact that man hungers for things, and seeks

to obtain them,—for bread, for love, for truth, for beauty, for all sorts of things,—and reaches out to grasp them ; and selfishness, in the evil sense, is only the willingness of a man to get these desirable things at the expense of the welfare of somebody else. There is no evil in selfishness anywhere, except right in there. Man, then needs to be developed.

He needs also intellectual development, so as to widen his conception of the universe, and give room and range for his powers as a limitless, thinking being. All truth he needs to know. He needs also the conquest of the beautiful, to make life fair. So art is one of the ministers and saviours of man. He needs discovery, the inventions, so that he may obtain control of all the natural forces of the universe. He needs the power to create a limitless supply for his limitless needs. He needs then to be able to create wealth in all its multitudinous forms.

What is a perfect man? What would we regard as a saved man? A man who is a splendid, perfect animal, to start with, in perfect physical condition ; a man with a grand brain, so that he may unlock all the doorways to the truth of things ; a man loving all lovable things ; a man looking up to and aspiring

towards all fine things that are beyond him; a man with moral perfection, standing in perfect loving — and so just and helpful — relations to all other things that live; a man spiritually adjusted, recognising himself as a child of God, and seeking to come into more intimate and personal relations with God. A man like this would be saved. There is nothing you could give him which would add to his perfection or his glory.

Who, then, are the saviours of the world? In some lower and preliminary sense let me note what I have been saying by implication. Those men that teach us the development of the body, that help us to find the secrets of health, are some of the saviours of mankind. So are those who have helped us to eliminate pain from the world, those who teach us the secret of outgrowing mental sorrows, those who help us to discover the secrets of nature around us, and so to control the forces by which wealth is created and want is done away. They know little of what they are doing who fight against the accumulation of wealth. Humanity as yet, in spite of what we call the tremendous gains of the last century, is poor, suffering for want of a million things that can never be attained until we can

control the forces of production more completely than we have been able to do yet.

So the creators of wealth must take their places among the saviours of man. Those who have delved into the secrets of the earth and explored the heavens and fed this infinite hunger of man for truth,—these, if they have done nothing else, if they have forgotten religion, philanthropy, no matter what else they have done, or not done, if they have helped man to grasp and discover truth, so far they are among the world's saviours.

Those who have helped us discover and master the secrets of beauty, the artists, the sculptors, the painters, the creators of beautiful buildings; those who have wrought the earth over under the form of landscape gardening,—all those who have been ministers of beauty are among the saviours of mankind. Those who have discovered new truths in any direction; those who have helped the world, have helped unfold and develop complete manhood and womanhood,—these in their degree have been saviours.

But, to come back again to that which is the most important thing of all, we find ourselves bowing once more in the presence of the gentle Nazarene, *the* Saviour, *our* Saviour,

in the supreme, the universal sense; and why? Jesus taught us—what? He said,—and note the significance of it,—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." He put his finger on the one central, essential thing in human life. A man may miss other things,—he may miss extensive knowledge, he may be ignorant, he may be poor, he may have little artistic sense or appreciation of beauty, he may know nothing of music, all the wonderful world in other directions may be closed to him; but if he loves, if he has learned the secret that God is love and the divine life among men is love, then he has a key to that which is the most important of all in these human lives of ours. The loving soul, the gentle spirit, the one who wishes to help God, to serve, will find this one thing alone guiding him in the midst of his ignorance. He may make mistakes; but will make no vital mistakes. He may miss much else; but, so long as he loves, he is in heaven even here among men, though in the midst of trouble and trial; for God is love, and love is God, and love is heaven.

Jesus, then, is our Saviour here. So far as the authentic teaching of Jesus goes, he does not seem to have cared for what we call intellectual truth. He gave us no philosophy, not

a word of science. He seemed to care little for the æsthetic side of things. We have no intimation that he knew anything about music. He recognised the beauty of the flowers by the wayside, and saw in them intimations of the love and kindliness of the Father in heaven ; but as for philosophy, for science, for art, for literature,—all these things he seemed to care nothing for. At any rate, there is no authentic testimony that he cared for them much ; but the one thing he did care for was that men should know that God was their Father, that they were His children, and that the way to get rid of human evils was to love men, love even your enemies, love the unlovely,—that is, love the possibilities in the unlovely ; love the invisible soul that might be evolved and developed ; love the child of God in the tramp, in the criminal, in the outcast ; surround them with this atmosphere of warmth and love, so as to make these beautiful things grow. This was the teaching of Jesus ; and this is the secret of that which is most important in human life.

I do, indeed, believe that it is immensely important that we know the truth of things, that we develop wealth, that we be able to eliminate human pain, physical suffering from the

world, that we develop art and beauty of every kind, that we make human life rounded and complete. But if we have got to give up everything else, we must keep that which was the secret and teaching of the Nazarene; for that is more important than all the others combined.

So Jesus remains, in the supreme sense of the word, after all the analysis and scepticism, after all philosophy and science have done their work,—he remains for us the supreme ideal of divine manhood. So in that direction he is our Saviour. And he is the more touching to us, appeals the more directly and strongly to the heart, because he teaches another deep secret of life. He is the suffering Saviour, not simply the loving Saviour. But he is love, willing to suffer even to the death for the objects of his love; and that is the supreme thing in all the universe.

And let me note that the life of Jesus simply illustrates supremely that which is of the very warp and woof of things, that which we can read in the very beginnings of life on earth. Go down as far as you please; and, if we can interpret the life that is there, we find this vicarious suffering love. Birds will sit upon their nests in the face of danger, and die in the

attempt to protect their eggs. Let their young be attacked, and they will face any monster in the attempt to lure the invader away from the place where the young are secreted,—suffering, consecrated love, love even willing to die. Among dogs, horses, the higher animals everywhere, if you choose to study it, you will find the illustration of this secret and central thing in all life. Life is bound together into one. No individual is anything more than an individual cell in an organism; and, if one member rejoices, all the members rejoice with it,—if one suffers, all suffer alike. We are under that law and necessity; and we cannot escape. If our friends go wrong, our hearts are wrung. If they succeed, we enter into their joy. And the ideal, true life is that which is willing voluntarily to endure this suffering, that the loved one may be benefited by it.

And so, as man has climbed up the ages, read it everywhere. What else is taught by the lives of the martyrs, the confessors, the teachers, the witnesses, those who have stood for truth? Socrates taught it in ancient Greece. The Buddha taught it in far-off India hundreds of years before Christianity was known. All over the world and in all ages, you find, however misinterpreted the fact may be in the lurid

light of prevailing barbarism, the vicarious suffering saviours.

In our own country we have just passed the birthday of him who perhaps is the greatest American that ever lived,—Lincoln, the martyr Lincoln, whose power over this nation and over the world and over all the future lies largely in this: that he suffered, that he carried the burdens, the sins, the wrongs, of the American people on his wearied brain and burdened, bleeding heart, and that he died because he was faithful, as was the Nazarene, to the last extreme. Faithful to what? To an intellectual truth, to art, to beauty? No. Faithful to the moral ideal, faithful to God, faithful to man, living and dying to deliver the world from a burden of sorrow and wrong.

It is the same principle; and the supremacy of Jesus lies in this,—that he is not an isolated case, that he is not an interpolated fact thrust into the human order from without, but that he was born in that human order, and sums up in himself that which is finest and sweetest and noblest in it all—the suffering love of a saviour, willing to suffer for the sake of love, and in order to deliver the object of that love from suffering and from evil of every kind.

VIII

WORSHIP

WE have found, as the result of our studies so far, that religion is an essential and permanent part of human nature and human life; and, since worship has always been regarded as an essential part of religion, we might think it safe to assume that worship also is to be permanent. But "worship" has covered a large variety of things in the evolution of the religious life of the race. And some of these things, which were once regarded as absolutely essential to any true worship, have already passed away. Nor this alone; they are regarded from the point of view of our present civilisation as not only unreasonable, but as barbaric or even immoral.

It seems wise, therefore, that we should trace the growth for a little of man's ideas concerning worship, and see, if we may, what parts of worship are to pass away, and what are to be permanent; *i. e.*, what is the essential thing in worship.

We have already seen that by a necessity of human nature man's early thoughts about God were ignorant, crude, barbaric. We have seen that men, of necessity, worshipped not simply one God, but many gods. And these gods have been very much like their worshippers. We find this to be true in any stage of human development. It is very difficult for us to think of God as anything more than the reflex of the best and highest, the noblest, the sweetest, the truest things in ourselves. And men on the barbaric level, of necessity, have barbaric thoughts about these invisible powers that they think of as on every hand. These beings, then, are somewhat like themselves,—having the same dispositions, the same wants, pleased after the same general fashion.

Religion in all ages has, of necessity, been the attempt on the part of men to get into right relations with these unseen powers, if they have been polytheists, or with the unseen Power, since we have come to believe that there is only one. The object of all worship has been to get into right, into helpful relations with these invisible beings. And since men have of necessity thought of the gods as substantially made in their own image, as men, only invisible, larger, mightier, but

endowed with substantially the same tastes and feeling, the same wants, it has been natural that, in their worship, they should try to please them, as they tried to please the visible potentates, chiefs and kings under whose power they lived.

And what are the great needs of early man? the great needs, for that matter, of man in any stage of his career? What are the few chief things that men have cared for? Food, drink, gifts, the gratification of their physical desires, praise, honour. And early worship always attempted to satisfy these supposed needs and desires of the invisible powers.

The first forms of worship, then, were bringing to the gods gifts of food, no matter what the particular kind of food may have been that was accessible to the particular tribe engaged in this worship,—grains, fish, flesh, anything that the people were accustomed themselves to feed upon; drink, poured out as a libation or as an offering. You must remember that they supposed that always these invisible spiritual beings partook of the spiritual or invisible parts of the food or the drink. Then there were offerings of all sorts, gifts of whatever the tribe or the tribesmen might value. Articles of clothing, weapons of war, decorations,

ornaments, works of crude barbaric art,—all these things were brought, and by the grateful hearts piled up as gifts to the objects of their worship.

Sacrifice, as we have already seen, came to be an important part of this worship ; and the more valuable the thing sacrificed, the more it was believed that the divine beings were pleased. So there came to be human sacrifices. There came to be believed in the sacrifices of beings who were half-human and half-divine,—Titans, demigods, incarnations of the invisible powers. So the ages went by, and men climbed ever up to higher and higher levels of civilisation, attained the ability to think finer, nobler thoughts of the invisible ones, came themselves to admire sweeter and nobler things. And so the form of service, the attempts at worship, gradually tended to clarify themselves, and to come nearer and nearer to that ideal of spiritual worship for which Jesus stands, and which he taught as the first great duty of man.

I need, before passing from this part of my theme, however, to note certain other things which in the early world were regarded as important elements of worship. We find in Greece, in Rome,—indeed, in nearly all of the

ancient nations,—that such things as now have generally passed out of civilised thought as connected with these matters were considered of even chief importance. The robe that the priest wore; the attitude in which he stood during his service; whether he faced to one quarter of the heaven or another; the implements to be used in the sacrifices; the forms of speech which he uttered; the tones of voice in which the words were spoken;—all these things have in some part of the world and at some stage in the history of humanity been regarded as of the very chiefest importance. Then there have been whole ages during which it has been believed that men could not acceptably approach God unless they had certain definite intellectual ideas concerning Him, unless they held to certain articles of belief as essentials of their creed.

We find as the Hebrew nation developed, that it gradually outgrew the older and cruder ideas concerning worship. It would be revolting if I should describe to you the actual ceremonies of the service in Solomon's time. The temple on these great occasions was one vast slaughter-house, hundreds of birds and animals being slain, and their blood poured out, the service requiring great numbers of men in

order to carry it on. The day came, however, when the people could no longer believe that the great God sitting up in heaven cared for these things; and the prophets made God say: "Away with all these sacrifices! They are a weariness and an abomination unto me. I care not for your burnt-offerings, for your rivers of oil that you pour out. What I want is a humble and contrite heart."

We come at last to the time when the prophet could say: "To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God," is the one great essential on the part of him who would come as a worshipper into His presence. And then, at last, we find Jesus talking with the woman of Samaria by the well, and putting away one after another the old conceptions of worship, saying that sacrifices were not essential; it was not necessary that the worship should be offered on Mount Gerizim, neither in Jerusalem, in the temple; none of these things were important; God was Spirit, and and the true worshipper henceforth must be he who could worship God in spirit and in truth. These were the ways by which God was, gradually, by the process of civilisation, sifting out the nations all over the world, gathering to Himself the band of true worshippers, who

cared not for the outward elements, but only for the inner condition of the heart.

As we look back over these things that have been regarded as essential elements of worship in the past, may we not rightly measure them in the light of our loftiest conception of the infinite and eternal Spirit, who is the life and the heart and the soul of this universe that overwhelms us by its immensity? Can we think of God as caring to have an animal killed and burned to please Him? Can we any longer believe with the writer of Genesis as he describes Noah making a sacrifice after the flood, and the great God up in heaven smelling the savour of the burnt flesh and being gratified and pleased by it? Can we think of God any longer as needing to be fed? Did he not say by the mouth of his old prophets, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; the cattle on a thousand hills are mine"? Can we think of Him any longer as needing drink?

And yet so enduring are these traditions and customs that they seem to become ingrained as a part of human nature. When we launch a ship here, in free America, even to-day, we must go through the last attenuated, worn-out remnant of that old, once universal custom of giving the gods drink, by breaking a bottle

over its prow. So much is left of the once universal office of libation,—pouring out drink to the invisible beings.

Can we think of God as pleased with a gift? Even Plato had reached the point where he said it was degrading for us to suppose any longer that the gods could be bought, could be pleased with offerings of that sort. And yet men all over the world, if they wished to gain a favour of their king, their chief, their ruler, came with a gift in their hands, not expecting to be received otherwise. Almost universally they carried over this conception into their worship, the invisible one from their point of view being like a chieftain who needed to be bought, placated, who cared for an offering, or who needed to have some one, a friend, a bosom companion, a favourite, intercede with him, plead with him on behalf of the petitioner. These ideas have been ingrained as parts of almost all the great religions of the world.

I remember some years ago, when I was in Rome, visiting one of the three or four hundred churches dedicated to the different Marys, and finding a statue of Mary before the altar almost buried under gifts,—rings, bracelets, jewels, rich clothes, valuables of

every kind, brought on the supposition that she would care, and that she would plead, perhaps, with Jesus, and that Jesus would plead with the Father, and so the worshipper might win at last by this roundabout way the favour of Heaven.

Can we believe that the infinite God of this universe cares about our personal adornments, the robes we wear? that He cares about the arrangement of the altar? that He cares whether we occupy an eastward position or look west or north or south? Is there any point of the compass to which we can look, and not be face to face with God? The Jew thought he must pray looking towards Jerusalem; the Mohammedan worshipped looking towards Mecca; and almost throughout Christendom to-day—as a relic of pagan sun-worship—emphasis is still laid upon the eastward position in prayer, looking towards the point from which the sun is to appear in the morning.

Can we believe to-day that the infinite God of this universe—who knows how we in our childhood and ignorance seek gropingly after truth and so many times fail to find it—will reject us and cast us out on account of some intellectual conviction to which, after long struggle, we attain? Does He care so much

for the words on our lips or the thoughts in our brains, or does He really care for the attitude and love and tender feeling of the heart?

What is it that the great God in heaven wants of His children? We wish to-day, just as much as did primitive man, to get into right relations with God. It is the one eternal search of the religious effort of the race,—to get into right relations with God; and we wish, if we may, to find out what God wants us to do in our worship, in order that we may come into right relations with Him. What is it that He chiefly cares for as the essential element of worship? Is it any of these things that we have been dealing with? Can we believe that the real God of the real universe, infinite and eternal, cares for these little, petty, childish affairs?

There are two or three things still held,—at least in some sections of the Church,—which are old relics of paganism, and which are so important that it seems to me worth while for a moment just to point them out. I do not desire to cultivate in your minds—which have rejected these things—a sense of superiority over your brethren. I would not have you look down upon somebody who still holds—for he may be noble in heart—a bar-

baric idea of worship. For God, I believe, accepts the sincere soul, whatever the form of his service may be,—however irrational, however barbaric,—more readily than He accepts the clearest-headed thinker of the modern world who is not deep down in his heart a true and noble worshipper.

One of these ideas is that a thing is sacred merely because it is old. If you should go back and converse with an old-time Greek, when he wished to say that a certain thing was sacred in his estimation, he would use this phrase, "Such a thing is old to me." "Old" and "sacred" were identical. There are thousands of people in the churches of Christendom to-day, who unthinkingly, are inclined to worship and bow down to whatever is old. It may be true and be old: it cannot be true because it is old. It is not necessarily true because it is new; but it is the true and the real, the expression of the divine in the universe and in life, which we wish to find; neither the old nor the new.

There is another thing already referred to, —the conception that we need somebody to intercede for us with the Father, that we need a favourite in heaven who can get God by his persuasion to be kind to us. This is barbarism

pure and simple. It sprung out of the universal experience of the ancient world with their chieftains. You go to Turkey to-day; and if you can get the ear of the vizier, the prime favourite of the Sultan, you may win almost any favour. You can get almost anything of any king in Christendom if you can get the ear of the court favourite. And so people have applied this idea to God, and said, "If we can only get somebody to plead with Him for us, then He will be kind."

Jesus teaches another idea. God is the universal Father of us all, and loves us and will help us. God will do right because He is God and we are His children. There need be no other reason.

Then there remains in one of the greatest churches in Christendom a relic of barbarism that it seems to me would be revolting to the worshippers themselves if they should stop to think of its origin and meaning. I refer to the thought that people are to be saved by eating and drinking the body and blood of God. The old barbarians believed that if they could tear out the heart of a tiger after they killed him and eat it, they would partake of his qualities of ferocity and power. If they could eat the heart of an enemy who was very brave and

strong, they believed they would come into possession of the qualities he possessed. And here, intruding itself on the very altars of our worship of the Supreme, is this barbarism, not yet outgrown by the civilisation of the world, —that we may come to God through the material eating of something and drinking something with these human fleshly bodies. Is that the way to become partakers of the divine nature? This is "materialism" of the grossest sort.

And so there are many elements, if I had time to go over them, that are survivals of the old paganism still remaining imbedded in the strata that human custom has laid down as the ages have gone by.

There is a certain class of mind that revolts as it makes a study of the old ideas that have prevailed in worship, and comes to wonder whether worship itself is an ennobling thing, whether it be not humiliating to bend and bow and kneel in the presence of any one. And, then, in this modern world, on the part of those who have studied modern science, and have become overwhelmed with the thought of the magnificence of the material universe and the unchangeableness of the laws according to which it is governed, there are those who wonder whether there is left any place for worship.

Let us turn now, and consider what is essential in worship and what are the implications of worship as bearing on the nature of the worshipper. Do we degrade ourselves in bending in the presence of the Supreme? As Browning expresses it in that wonderful poem "Saul,"

> "With that stoop of the soul which, in bending, upraises it too,"

are we not higher and nobler when we are bent in the presence of the Divine?

We decide the rank of any being by the question whether there is in that being the possibility of worship. For what is worship? If we analyse it carefully, we shall find that it is not of necessity in any of these things which I have been dealing with so far, though it may be in any or all of them. It is an attitude of the soul; it is an exercise of mind and heart and spirit. When you analyse worship, you find that the essence of it is in the one word "admiration." The man who admires, the being who admires,—that is, wonders,—looks up with adoration towards something which he thinks of as above him, — that man or being is a worshipper.

Why is it that in our ordinary, every-day

life we think of the dog as perhaps in some ways the noblest of animals, the nearest to ourselves? Because there is in the dog this capacity to come into personal relationship with a being above himself, to look up to that being with at least the instinctive movements of reverence, of wonder, of admiration, of love, so that the nature of the dog becomes lifted through this worshipping attitude towards his master.

Some years ago an Indian chief came on to Washington to plead with the Great Father there for something which he desired; and while he was talking with a gentleman, one day, he was asked what it was that he had seen in his visit to the East which impressed him the most. And he said at once, "The bridge across the Mississippi at St. Louis." He had not seen the Brooklyn Bridge. Perhaps he would have chosen that if he had. And the man said, "Are you not surprised at the great buildings at Washington, the Capitol, the Treasury, the monuments?" And he said, "Yes, but my people can pile stones on top of each other; but they cannot make a cobweb of steel hang in the air." Here was a recognition on the part of this Indian, of the mystery, the marvel and wonder of a civilisa-

tion that was above and beyond anything that his people had attained.

But right in that fact, that he could be touched with mystery and wonder and admiration, the student of human progress recognises the possibility of his doing like deeds by and by. There was in him the ability to be developed into the creator of these great wonders that could touch him thus with admiration.

If you find a being anywhere on the face of the earth, who has no curiosity, no capacity for wonder, who never expresses surprise, who does not admire anything,—I care not whether he is a wealthy, worn-out modern or an undeveloped barbarian—you will find a very low grade of civilisation. He will be without the possibility of coming to anything noble or high.

The next quality that I need to notice in this matter of worship, and that makes it so important for us to cultivate, is that the worshipper always tends to become transformed into the likeness of that which he admires. It is said that Alexander the Great carried with him always a copy of Homer's Iliad, and that the one great admiration of his life was the famous old Greek warrior of Troy, Achilles. And this admiration tended perpetually to

transform the character of Alexander into the likeness of the old Greek hero. We inevitably absorb the qualities that we love and admire. We inevitably become made over into the likeness of those beings whom we chiefly care for.

You have friends that you love and worship. You have memories of the dead that you carry ever enshrined in your hearts. They are the noblest people, perhaps, that you have ever known. They are enthroned in your admiration; and, gradually, you are being transformed into the likeness of these. This power works according to this law, inevitably. You may go through all the outward forms of worship; you may bend your head or your knees in church service ever so many times during the week; you may engage in rituals or services of any kind, no matter what; but you are really being made over by your admirations. If you go through formal services, and you love and admire something else, you are being transformed into the object that you admire. You may have the word of divine worship upon your lips; but the power is in that which you love in your heart.

Another point. Only the worshippers of the world have in them the power of growth. It

is the people who are haunted by this unattainable ideal who make advances. When they climb to one level, the ideal still leads them on, and they strive after its attainment. And so it is the worshipper, and the worshipper alone, who has in him the power and potency of unfolding all that is highest and finest and noblest in human nature.

This is the reason why we have hope for those who have chosen as their heroic characters the noblest and greatest men of the world. So long as France, for example, chiefly admires Napoleon, so long there is no hope for the redemption, the uplifting, the deliverance of France. So long as we admire men like Washington, like Lincoln, counting them the chiefest heroes of our national history, so long there is in us the potency and power of developing into the likeness of these heroic, these noble characters.

If you find an artist who thinks he can paint perfectly, there is no possibility of his becoming a great painter. If he can bend himself, his soul, in reverence before the Sistine Madonna, before the creations of the masters, new or old, and feel that they transcend all the power of his exertions so far, and be lifted to seek after those qualities that make them

supreme, then there is a chance for him to become a great artist. If men admire the truth-seekers, the leaders, the lovers, the servants of the race; if women admire such characters as Florence Nightingale, Dorothea Dix, — the women who have rendered the greatest services in the past,—this worship has in it the power to lift them up and lead them on to the accomplishment of similar deeds. Admiration is the condition of all that is highest and best in human life.

We need to consider now for a moment the hopeful fact that there are more worshippers, and more worshippers of God, than we are commonly apt to imagine, particularly if we limit our conception of God and our conception of worship to the creeds and customs of our own churches. Let us see, then, who are the real worshippers of the world.

They are those, as we have already said, who admire; and, if they admire anything that is noble, they are of necessity worshippers of God, whether they think it themselves or not; for God is the one and only source of all that is noble and fair and supreme. Take the worshippers of natural beauty, for example,— Wordsworth, or even Byron. We are not accustomed to think of the latter as having a re-

ligious nature; but some of the finest bursts of admiration for the beauty of the world to be found in the poetry of England are in his works. Any one who admires natural beauty, who is touched by a flower, whose tears start when he listens to the music of the wind in the trees, who is awed and thrilled by the stars in the night heavens, who is uplifted in the presence of mountains, who is stirred by the music of the waves upon the seashore, any man who thus loves and admires natural beauty is a worshipper of God; for that, as far as it goes, is an expression of the thought and the life and the beauty of God.

Then, if you are a worshipper of artistic beauty,—pictures, sculpture; if you are touched and thrilled by music,—you are worshippers to this extent; for these, again, are, so far as they go, manifestations of that which is divine.

Suppose you are a worshipper of truth. This worship of truth is one of the most modern of all characteristics,—care for truth, truth as such, truth wherever it leads, belief in truth as from God, as supremely from Him, and only from Him. This is a very modern characteristic. So I love to believe that Huxley, though not a worshipper of God in the popular sense, though he would not say really that

he believed in God, counting himself an agnostic, was one of the devoutest of the modern worshippers of God ; for there has never lived a man with a supremer care for truth, as he, according to his methods, was able to discern and demonstrate it. He cared so much for truth that in the presence of death itself he would not allow himself to be comforted with any consolation for which he could not bring the defence of his reason, as he was accustomed to use it. He said: "I may not have comfort,"—of course I am only quoting the idea,— "I may walk in darkness, I may go out into the unknown, not knowing whither I go. I may not feel at all certain that God is guiding me or that He cares for me. But I will be true to myself: I will not lie." He was grandly true, then, to what he regarded as the truth. And, since God is truth, and truth is one great manifestation of God, he was nobly faithful to so much as he could see of God. So far as he went, therefore, Huxley was a devout worshipper of God.

Take an illustration in another direction,— Charles Sumner. We all grant that he was one of the noblest men that ever lived. When some one asked him about the two commandments of love to God and love to men, he

frankly said : "I am not sure that I know anything about the first ; but I have tried to keep the second."

These, then, who are devoted to the service of man, who care for human welfare, human progress, human advance, who try to lift off human burdens, break human bonds and set the world free,—these men, whatever their theological ideas, are worshippers of God.

So we may say of those who have had a supreme care for righteousness, that the world should be right at any cost, though the heavens might fall,—these men, whatever their theological ideas, have been worshippers of God. It is said that Wilberforce, who was the master leader in the abolition of slavery in the English colonies, was so absorbed in his work that, when some zealous religionist asked him one day if his soul was saved, he said he had been so interested in carrying on this great life-work of benefiting the world that he had not stopped to find out whether he had a soul. Truly, a man like that was a worshipper of God.

And so in every nation, in all ages, under every sky, men have worshipped beauty or truth or the ideals of human service, of human goodness ; and loving thus the high and fine

things which are the manifestations of God, they are then worshippers. And whether they are in the woods with Bryant, who says that the woods were God's first temples; whether they are in some pagan temple and have never heard of our religion; whether they are in Rome in St. Peter's; whether they are in a Quaker meeting-house, where the form of worship is so simple that often it consists of sitting and waiting for the moving of the Spirit, —wherever they are, if they admire whatever is lovely, true, and noble, and are lifted and moved by a desire to help on and benefit the world,—these are the true worshippers of Him who is Spirit, and who desires to be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

But, while they who admire beauty or truth, they who are awed by mystery or lifted by music, they who admire heroic deeds or consecrate themselves to human service,—while these are true worshippers of God, and far above those who are punctilious in ceremonial while lacking the love which is the great essential, there is one thing which is better yet. These admirers of the external manifestations of the Divine may be only in the outer courts of the temple. There is an inner holy of holies, into which the great spiritual leaders of

the race have shown a way. Blessed are they who find the door, and are admitted to the presence chamber of the King,—better yet, who are folded close to the loving heart of the Father.

IX

PRAYER

THE change in thought and theory which is compelled by the moral and intellectual advancement of the world finds one of its best illustrations in the matter of prayer. In the childhood of the race, prayer was the most natural and simple thing in the world. There were in the thought of the people many gods with different dispositions and different degrees of power; but, so far as they were able to accomplish the things which their worshippers desired, prayer to them for these things was common and unquestioned.

They were looked upon — these invisible potentates — very much as were the visible chiefs and kings. They could not do everything, and opposing chiefs and kings might stand in the way of the things they really desired to do; but they could be approached, they could be petitioned. If you brought an acceptable gift in your hand, if you happened

to find the tribal god in a favourable mood of mind, if you could approach him through some favourite, some mediator who had always access to him, if you could come in the right way and at the right time, it was the most natural thing in the world that your petitions should be answered, and the gifts you desired bestowed upon you.

And when, in the course of human civilisation, the most advanced races came to be believers in only one God, the conditions were not very much changed. God was a being not very far away, sitting on a throne surrounded by a court, attended by a retinue of angels ready to go on any mission on which He might choose to send them; and it was very easy to ask Him for whatever you might desire.

But here again, as in the case of the old-time polytheists, you could not always be sure of having your petition heard or of having your request granted. You must come to God in the definitely appointed way. You must bring an acceptable gift; for this idea was not outgrown in the old Hebrew days when the prophets told the people that their prayers were not answered because they had not brought the tithes into the storehouse. There were ways of appealing to Him that were more

likely to succeed than others. You must approach Him in a definite frame of mind. You must have faith. You must be earnest enough. You must continue tireless in your petition. You must come by way of some mediator,—some favourite who was supposed to have the ear of God at all times. If you did this, you might expect an answer to your prayer. And if, as was too frequently the case, the prayers were not answered in the way in which the petitioner desired, it was easy enough to find for it a reason without discrediting the efficacy of prayer itself.

There was not a great deal of change in the theories of men in regard to this matter from the old days of polytheism, even after the belief in one God came to be the practically universal one among civilised nations. Among our own ancestors here in this country, within two hundred—may we not say within one hundred—years, practically the same ideas prevailed. God could be petitioned for rain with the expectation that the rain would come. We could ask Him to give us prosperous seasons, —that the crops in the fields might grow, that they might come to their harvest. If a friend was going to sea, it was believed that prayer would have some definite effect upon his safety

as he went in his ship down into the great waters. If a friend started off on a land journey, prayer in some mysterious way might touch the question of his safety there. If a friend was sick, prayer was believed to have power to cure disease; or, at any rate, prayer could touch the one Power who held in His hand all the issues of life. And if we prayed in the right way, with the right spirit, and persistently enough, it was supposed that almost anything might be accomplished.

And why not? The universe for hundreds of years after Christiainty began its career of conquest over the civilised world was a very small affair. Up to within four hundred years it was no larger than what we think of our solar system as being to-day. It was only a little way above the blue that the heavenly court was situated. And there was no reason, that the people were acquainted with, why God, at the request of one of His children, should not make almost anything come to pass that might be desired.

God was outside the universe and stood in such a relation to it as that in which a king stands to his kingdom. He could issue an edict, and have His will carried out. There was no popular knowledge of nature and

natural law that made this seem difficult or unreasonable. This was the condition of things, practically, till within a hundred years.

It is true that the old Ptolemaic system passed away, and the Copernican slowly took its place in the thoughts and imaginations of men; and it is true that the priests of the Catholic Church, and the ministers in the Protestant, began to be troubled by the beginnings of scientific thought. When Kepler discovered the laws of planetary motion, when Newton discovered the laws of gravity, there were those who raised the alarm and said that these scientific men were taking the world out of the hands of God and putting it into the keeping of a law. They had the feeling that somehow or other barriers were being raised between them and their heavenly Father, and that henceforth communication and the answer to prayer might be more difficult than it had previously been. But until within comparatively recent years, any and all difficulties of this sort were very few and troubled not many minds.

But two great things have happened within a hundred years. The world has waked up to such moral and spiritual and humane thoughts about God as have not previously prevailed;

and then a new scientific revolution in our thought about the universe has taken place. These two things have raised a host of difficulties in the popular mind concerning the possible efficacy of prayer.

Let us first deal with the moral difficulties for a moment. Perhaps I shall be speaking for others if I speak of experiences I have passed through myself. The first difficulties I ever had with prayer were not scientific ones. I began to raise questions like this. I said, "What is the use of my elaborately telling God a thousand things which He knows better than I do?" That was one difficulty. Then I said: "God is at least as good as the best men that we know. He must be infinitely good if He is God. Why, then, should I plead with Him, beg of Him to be good, try to persuade Him to be kind to me, to give me the things that I need?" This difficulty became almost insurmountable to me.

And then as I looked over the world and thought of praying for the world's salvation, I was taught, on the one hand, that the number of those who were going to be saved was definitely fixed before the foundation of the world; and I wondered, if that were true, how my prayer was going to affect the matter any. On

the other hand, I was told that all men were perfectly free to accept the salvation if they would. I was told that this freedom of the will was such that a man might defy the Omnipotent if he chose, forever. So I said to myself, "If he can and if he chooses to, and if God even cannot move him, why should I pray to God to move him?"

Difficulties like these were the ones that pressed upon me first and most heavily. I began to feel that the kind of prayer-meeting in which I had been trained as a young man presented more difficulties to the religious life than it did help. I used to go as a boy to one of these meetings, and have it proved to me conclusively from Scripture that thousands and millions of souls were going every year to perdition because people in small country towns here in America—on another continent —did not pray to God hard enough to save them. It seemed unjust to me that salvation should hang on such a condition.

I used to hear a man in the prayer-meeting, when I was young, say over and over again in his prayers, "It is time for Thee, O Lord, to work," —the impression being made in my youthful mind that if God could only be roused and got to be interested in it as we were, some-

thing might be accomplished. I came to feel that those prayer-meetings bordered closely on irreverence instead of piety, and that this besieging God, begging Him to be good, begging Him to save the souls of His own children, was not the highest kind of trust and piety. That kind of prayer, that way of looking at prayer, troubled me; and I confess I have never been able to see a solution of that difficulty except the belief that God, the perfect, loving, tender, true Father, will do somehow, somewhen, somewhere, all that is best and noblest for all His children.

Then there sprung up no end of scientific difficulties. We have come to hold a new conception of the universe. We have found that nature is a perfect order, that everything works in accordance with—so far as we can see—unchanging law.

And so the religious world has been perplexed by the difficulties that spring out of this great discovery. There is no question as to the fact, it seems to me, any longer. The greatest scientific minds of the world tell us that they find no tiniest corner of this infinite universe where there is chaos or disorder. Everything is working in accordance with unchanging methods which we call laws.

Now, then, let us face this fact for a moment. Do not be troubled by the negative side. Wait till I get through with it. Let us face this fact for a moment, and see where we are. Suppose I pray for rain. Do I appreciate what it means? To add to or take away from the atmospheric condition overhanging the city of New York to-day by one tiniest particle of moisture would be as much a miracle as though I expected by a prayer to hurl the Catskills into the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. A chain of cause and effect runs back to the very beginning of time and on to the very end; and these atmospheric conditions are links in that chain.

Suppose I ask God to guard the safety of a friend who is in mid-Atlantic on an ocean steamer. Is there any conceivable relation — I ask you to think carefully—between a verbal request of that sort and the weather on the Atlantic, or the condition of the ship, the way in which it was built, the competence of the commander, the order of the crew, the conditions on which safety depends? Would my prayer move an iceberg out of its course or change the sailing of the ship? Do we to-day, any of us, conceive a possible causal relation of that sort?

Suppose that I should, being a farmer, wish my potatoes or wheat to grow. Now what is it that makes potatoes and wheat grow? In the first place, good seed; next, good soil, fertilisers, a proper quantity of rain, sunshine, — all these conditions. Is there any conceivable relation between a prayer and a change of these physical conditions of earth and air? Do we not, all of us, feel that we cannot find anywhere in these a place to put a petition as a causative force?

So in any department of nature—it makes no difference where we turn — are we not confronted by similar facts? Suppose a friend has started across the continent on a railway train; and somewhere there is a bridge which the engineer did not build as he ought to have done. He put in poor material, or some of the timbers have decayed since the bridge was built. It has not been properly inspected. The desire of the corporation to make as much money as possible has kept it from making needed repairs. Now is there any relation between my prayer and a rotten timber or a cracked bit of steel or iron? So in case of illness. My friend is sick. I stand by his bedside, and see him suffer. Perhaps the last few moments have come; and I watch the lessening

breath, and my heart cries out for help. I would give my life if he might live; but are not these physical bodies of ours under the inexorable law of cause and effect, exactly like railway bridges, ocean steamers, and crops of wheat? Is there any relation between the utterance of my wish and the course of the disease?

These will do as hints of the difficulties that confront us on account of our new conception of the scientific order of the world. But so long as God was conceived of as being outside the universe, as one who had made it as a man makes a machine, it was easy to say a miracle might be wrought. God could increase the speed with which the machine should run, presumably, or He might slow it up, or He could break through and cause these forces that are at work to accomplish results that they would not but for His interference. This is the old theory of miracle, which was believed in and defended for generations.

They said, "This is God's universe; and, suppose it is a great mechanism, cannot He interfere with it, and make it do things that otherwise would not have been done?" Presumably, He might do it; and yet there always remained the great question of fact. As we

studied and observed, was there any reason to suppose that He did do it? Had any one seen cases in which it had been done? And so the human heart with its wishes and hopes, was thrown back upon itself, and people began to feel that they were shut away from the Father in heaven, could not any longer approach Him and receive His help and care.

But now we are gaining a new thought about the universe and about God's relation to it. The best thinkers of the modern world no longer conceive of God as outside the universe, which is a mechanism which He has made and set going, and with which presumably He might interfere if He chose. We have come rather to regard it as an organism, as alive from centre to circumference, and God as its life. And so this order, that we call changeless law, is only the method of working of the God who is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning"; and we trust Him, and we love Him, and we are able to live hopefully and successfully because there is no change, no shadow of turning with Him.

Suppose, for a moment, that this order were liable to be interfered with. Do you not see, will you not look into it far enough to observe,

that it would turn the whole world into a madhouse? We should not be able to count on anything. Suppose water did freeze to-day at 32 degrees Fahrenheit, how could we know it would freeze at the same temperature to-morrow,—God being liable to interfere? The only way by which we can learn anything, and lay out plans for the future, and live our lives in peace and trust and hope, is because we rest forever on the certainty that God does not change.

Now all these movements and methods around us which we call natural forces and natural laws, are only the present life and activity of God, our Father, not alone in heaven, but here upon earth. This is the modern conception of the relation in which God stands to the universe.

But this only intensifies our difficulty in one way. We cannot conceive of God as undoing with one hand what He is all the time doing with the other. For the world-order is God's method, not a machine that He has made and put away from Himself. It is God, right here in eternal activity; and it is changeless—why? Because the first time—if we could conceive a first time that God did anything—He would do the right thing; and with precisely the same

conditions He could not do a different, that is, a wrong thing. Changelessness is an inevitable inference from the wisdom and goodness of God.

But now let us take a view of the whole matter that goes deeper than we have hitherto been ; and, if you will follow me, I think we may find that all our difficulties in regard to prayer fade away, being due to partial conceptions of God's truth and His methods of working.

Let us take an illustration as a hint of the great truth that I wish to make clear, if I can. Suppose my father had built me a wonderful house, and then he had hidden himself,—you may suppose that he might be in some room of the house inaccessible to me, or somewhere else. He has built me a wonderful house, and has so arranged it that, as I make my home in it, I can touch an electric button, and straightway food, whatever I may desire, is furnished to me. I touch another electric button, and I have drink of any kind I may wish. I touch another, and clothing is furnished me. I touch still a fourth, and I have books. I touch another and music delights my ear. I touch another, and beautiful pictures are unfolded before me. So, whatever I desire I have, by

complying with this pre-established and changeless order, this condition of things.

Now, though my father is not visible, and though I gain all I wish only by means of this pre-established order, is my father any the less the one who gives them to me? And do I get them in any other way than by asking for them by prayer? Do you not see? We all pray as much as did primitive man. Every man alive prays every day of the year and every hour of every day that he is conscious. He cannot escape praying if he would; for what is the essence of prayer? If I wish a thing, I am praying. If I aspire towards something higher and better and hope for it; if I reach out my hand to grasp what I want,—I pray for that thing, no matter how long continued my search, whatever methods I may use. Anything that I strive to attain I pray for, and I pray to God for it; for God is the one centre and source of all the riches that this universe contains of every kind, and I am His child. So, no matter through what means or by what methods, it is prayer in essence just the same; only, when I am dealing with this lower order that I call the material, I must comply with the conditions that control that order.

If I wish my potatoes to grow, God has or-

dained this universe in such a way that I must comply with His conditions for having them grow; and those conditions are not a verbal request,—that is all. But, in raising my crop of potatoes, I am dealing first-hand with God just as really as when I am on my knees and engaged in what is technically called "prayer." We must redeem our thought of this universe from secularism, and realise that it is sacred all through, from zenith to nadir, — sacred all through.

Suppose I wish to cross the Atlantic by a ship. Oh, how we petty, puny human beings do boast about our power over nature! What power over nature do we possess? We talk about wielding the lightnings, compelling the winds to be our servants. What do we do when we wish to cross the Atlantic? We construct a ship as nearly as we can, after ages of the most careful experience, in conformity with the laws that control the movement of a ship at sea; and, just in so far as we are able to study those laws carefully and comprehend them and obey them, just in so far God's forces work for us, God's winds blow us from port to port. We do not control the winds; we obey the winds, which are God's present power in action.

So, if it is a steamship ; we have studied for a century to comprehend in some small degree the laws that control the contraction and expansion of steam, and we have adapted our machinery to this force ; and by as much as we have comprehended, and by as much as we humbly and reverently obey, by so much God in the steam propels our engines and drives our ship in the face of wind and tide from port to port. It is God doing it all the time ; and our adapting ourselves to the laws of God, humbly and reverently and patiently and persistently asking God to do it,—that is prayer in the realm where steam rules or where the winds control.

Suppose we wish to build a factory by some mountain stream. Do we compel the water to serve us? What do we do? We study the power of the water ; and after years of experience we have learned that the man's mill will be the most successful one that is built most perfectly to accord with the force of the water as it runs from a higher level to a lower. So, if we ask God aright, if we comply with the changeless, eternal conditions, He does it ; if not, He does not do it.

So in every department of human life ; we may call it ever so material, we stand face to

face with the eternal God of this universe; and He turns every wheel for us, He does all the things that we boastfully speak of as our accomplishments. We talk of electricity and of illuminating our streets. We illuminate our streets if we obey God absolutely. If there is a flaw in that obedience, suddenly we are plunged in darkness; and the light does not come again until we have found the mistake and remedied it,—obeyed God in that department of His working. So everywhere the one eternal fact of prayer faces us, and rules us in every department of human life, in every department of human activity and achievement.

Every invention is a prayer, every discovery is a prayer, every achievement of every kind is a prayer. We send our trains across the plains, our ships across the sea. Our machinery hums under the influence of water or steam or electric power. Our streets are illuminated. All these things are accomplished in answer to prayer,—prayer to the universal God, according to the changeless method of that department of His universe in which we wish our result.

Is prayer, then, something likely to be outgrown? Rather, as we come to appreciate it,

do we find that we are unconsciously obeying the apostolic command, "Pray without ceasing"; and by as much as we pray, and pray wisely, do we succeed in every department of human life.

But now, to go a step higher. We have found that this is prayer in the material ranges of the universe; but we wish moral and spiritual advantages. How shall we prosper here? If we wish to develop ourselves as moral beings, to transform ourselves until we become made over into the likeness of that which is noble and true and high and holy, we must obey here also the inexorable laws. It will not do simply to ask God to make us good, and make no effort ourselves in that direction. If we wish to become good, we study the great characters of the world; and we must be strenuous in our efforts to overcome temptation, to climb ever from higher heights to higher heights of moral and spiritual achievement. Simply words, asking God are of no avail.

And here let me say, in general, that if we could accomplish results we desire merely by the shaping of breath into words, it would result in the demoralisation of the world. It would be a premium on laziness and incapacity.

Suppose a farmer should say: "I will not cultivate my crops; I will lean comfortably over the fence, and ask God to do it." Suppose an engineer should not take pains to build his bridge properly, trusting the train would pass over it in safety, because the friends of some of the passengers were praying. Suppose we should not send proper officers to command our ships, or drill properly the men who have charge of them at sea, and trust to prayer to avert the inevitable catastrophe that would result. Do you not see how this idea of prayer is shallow, and does not reach the heart of the difficulty?

When we come up into the higher ranges of thought and life, to our spiritual relationship to God, do we change Him there any more than we affect that result in what we call the material ranges of the universe? Is God changeable up here, who is the changeless One in the lower realms of life? I do not believe it. When I pray to God, I do not expect to change Him. If I thought I could change Him, I would never dare to open my lips in petition. It is because I know I cannot change Him that I pray, and pray with my whole heart and soul,—pray trustingly, lovingly, confidently, that grand things may result; and why?

Let me use another illustration, possibly throwing some light upon this matter. I have a plant that does not grow. The leaves are fading and dropping off. Something is the matter with it. What shall I do? It occurs to me that, perhaps, if I take it outdoors, give it better air, let it be where the winds can blow upon it, where the rains will refresh it, where the sun will shine upon it, it will take a new lease of life. I do that; and the result is that, as a consequence of my effort, the plant does live and grow.

Have I changed—what? Have I changed the sun any, the rain or the dew? No. I have simply changed the relation between my plant and these forces that have in them the power of life. I have accomplished my purpose, however, just the same.

So I believe that, when I pray to God, when I come into this spiritual sympathy with Him, this personal attitude towards Him, I change the relation between my soul and God. I do not change Him; but I get a result in answer to my prayer that is just as effective as though I changed Him,—more effective. I change my relation to God, and the drooping life in me revives; and I have new power, new joy, a new sense of peace in His presence.

So it seems to me that from the lowest order of nature clear up to the very presence-chamber of the invisible One the same law holds. God does not change; but my prayer —prayer of one kind on one level of life, of another kind on another level—complies with the inevitable and eternal conditions of life and peace. And so I gain the answer to my lifelong desire.

Even the prayers that have been most common in the past, defective as they have been, have not been all astray. That which I have been dealing with, as you will recognise, has mostly been one element only of prayer: begging, asking for things. But the better part of prayer is not begging; it is thanksgiving, it is aspiration, it is trust, it is communion. I come into the presence of a friend. I sit and talk; we exchange ideas; this is sympathy, the touch of the hand, and both of us are refreshed and lifted up; but we have not either of us begged anything from the other, and we have not either of us expected the other to change or to become something different from what he was before.

Here, then, in trust and communion, in gratitude, are the great secret places of prayer. And these remain, as they always have been,

sources of strength and consolation beyond the power of words to express. A child wakes up in the night, looks up, perhaps, from some bad dream, and finds mother bending over the cradle. He does not ask for anything; he does not need anything except the consciousness that she is there.

How many times, when a person has been going through some dangerous surgical operation, has he found power simply by clasping the hand of a friend! The pain was not abated, the danger of the operation remained just what it was before; but there came an increment of strength, a feeling of peace, because of the presence of love and sympathy.

It is the sense of the presence of some one you love which you care for. So I believe that right in here is the grandest, noblest part of prayer, that no scientific difficulties can ever touch. God is my Father. I do not want Him to change. I would not, if I might, ask Him to take a stumbling-block out of my road. Perhaps the stumbling-block ought to be there. Suffering, as I have, so keenly, so intensely, so constantly, for two years past, I am not sure that I would dare to ask this burden to be removed if I might. I should hesitate. Perhaps it is better that it should not.

Suffering of all sorts faces us in this world, —loss, death, trouble; but if we can believe that this is God's house, and we are His children living in it, and that we are here for a purpose, that we can touch His hand or feel that we clasp the edge of His robe, even in the dark, and know somehow that it is all right, there is the power and the potency of the noblest thing we can conceive of in prayer. If we can only hear that song of Browning's in "Pippa Passes,"—

> "God 's in His heaven,
> All's well with the world,"—

do we need to pray for anything else?

To my mind there is something superb in the authentic teaching of Jesus on this subject. He discourages public prayer. He tells us to go into our closet and talk with the Father; and, if we follow His example, He did not ask for things much. He shrunk, as we all shrink, from pain. He said: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." He did not ask for a great many things. His prayer was gratitude and trust. So it seems to me that as we get older, as we think more deeply, as we get closer to God, we leave behind us that old attitude of

begging for selfish advantages. We find that the grandest and sweetest things for ourselves do not come along those channels. Science, in its latest word, is in that utterance of Tennyson, where he says :

"Speak to Him, thou, for He hears ; and Spirit with spirit can meet.
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet."

We can speak to Him ; and so I trust myself to speak to Him without caring whether my words are always overwise and carefully selected or not. When my little boy, playing on the floor at my feet, at last tired out, climbs up on my knees and prattles and talks to me, and tells me what he wishes, do I care whether he is wise or not or whether he asks me for things that a philosopher would ask for ? I do not want him to be a philosopher. I want him to be my boy.

And so, if God be our Father, I think He would get tired of us if we were always posing as philosophers in His presence. Let us pour out our hearts, and love Him and believe He loves us, and learn to trust Him, so that we may be patient if the burden does crush us. Only let us get hold of His hand ; then we

will bear the pain; we will walk, if it is ever so dark. We will not trouble. We will wait until the light breaks. Only let us get hold of His hand and feel His touch, which is life and peace.

X

THE CHURCH

THERE is a certain section of the Episcopal Church in this country that is accustomed to make the claim that that Church is the only religious organisation in America that has a right to that name. This claim to be *the* Church is a very common one on the part of the Anglican Church in England; and it seems a more simple and natural claim there, for the reason that it is the one religious organisation recognised by the Government, and established and supported by public taxation. But if we trace the matter a little further down the years, towards the far-off beginning, we find that there is another branch of the Christian Church which looks upon the Episcopal Church in this country, and even the Anglican Church across the sea, as being an upstart, a parvenu, heretical both in its order and its doctrine, as having no claim to speak for God with authority.

The Roman Church, of course, as you are

aware, is the one I refer to, which holds to this position in regard to the Anglican Church and its claim. Looking further still, we find that the Greek Church looks down with a pitying sort of contempt upon even the Roman Church and its pretences and claims. Not a great while ago the pope issued an invitation to the other Churches in Christendom to help in the matter of uniting all religious bodies in one, —meaning, by that invitation, of course, that all other religious bodies should come to Rome. This the Greek Church treated with contempt, and made the claim that it antedated, not only in time, but in authority, the pretensions of the power that is located on the banks of the Tiber. The impartial historical student, who has no brief to make out, no theory to support, who is simply trying to find the truth, looks into and dismisses, either gladly or sorrowfully, as the case may be, these pretensions on the part of all three.

One claim, for example, is that the priesthood has some peculiar efficacy and power on account of what is called the Apostolic Succession. That is, each priest in his ordination has had the hands of some older priest—some one ordained before him — placed upon his head; and this one has felt the touch of a

preceding priest, and so on, they claim, clear back to the Apostles. And this is supposed to confer upon the priests of to-day a divinely appointed authority and power to administer the sacraments, to conduct the worship, to stand as the representatives of the divine power here on earth.

Now, as a matter of fact, two things must be said about this claim. In the first place there is not one single particle of proof on the face of the earth that is worth any honest and earnest man's attention that any such thing has ever happened, that there is any such thing as Apostolic Succession, to start with. And in the second place there is no proof that, if there were, it would carry any validity or spiritual power or divine authority with it. For there is certainly no record of the divine appointment of any such order.

There is another claim,—I think you will find this made by each one of these three great branches of the Church equally, — that the Church has been made by divine appointment the depository of the divine truth, so much of the divine revelation as it is necessary for man to know in order to be saved. The Church has this special, specific, divine deposit of truth in its keeping,—that is the claim. Again it

must be said by the calm and careful, unbiassed historical student that there is absolutely no basis for any such claim.

Note, for example, the deposit which the Anglican Church holds is different from that which the Roman Church holds. The deposit which the Greek Church holds is different from both the others. Which of them is the original divine deposit? Nobody can tell; there is no record of any such deposit ever having been made at all. And, then, we know—that is too large a subject for me to go into at present—that there have been definite, distinct, important changes made in the beliefs which have been held by all three of these branches of the great Universal Church; and we know, beyond all question, that each one of them has made the most serious and lamentable mistakes as to matters of fact and truth. So there is no basis for this claim that either one of them has God's everlasting truth in its keeping; and yet it is assumed by the supposed authoritative utterances of all three of them, and assumed continually.

There is another tremendous claim that is made, this specially by the Roman Church, that it has the power of the keys,—the power to open and shut heaven, the power to admit

or exclude whomsoever it will; that it stands as the divinely appointed successor and representative of Christ here on earth. Again, as in regard to these other claims, truth compels the careful and unbiassed historic student to say that there is absolutely not the slightest basis for any such claim. Even Christ himself never made such a claim even on his own behalf.

They tell us, for example, that Peter was selected among the twelve apostles to be the successor of Christ, and that he went to Rome and became the first bishop there—the first in the long line of popes which has reached from that day to this. I challenge scholarly denial of the statement which I am about to make. Anybody can make prejudiced and bigoted denial of anything. The best scholars in the world suppose, what seems to me beyond reasonable question, that this whole passage in the New Testament about the keys and Peter was an after-thought and an interpolation after the claim on the part of the Roman power had been put forth. Be that as it may, the one point I wish to emphasise is this: there is no historical reason in the wide world for supposing that Peter ever went to Rome at all, much less that he was bishop of

the Church there and the first in the line of popes.

After the book of the Acts of the Apostles closes, there is absolutely no historical trace whatever of the apostle. The hundreds of legends that have grown up and flourished in the Church are of no more historical authority than the story of William Tell or of Hercules. So much for these stupendous claims put forth on the part of the different great branches of the Church.

When we come to Protestantism, to the ordinary run of our churches here in this country, what of them? Each one here has some peculiar and extraordinary claim to make on its behalf. I was born and trained in the Congregational Church. I have been familiar from my childhood with the supposed fact that Congregationalism was certainly the order of the New Testament—the democratic, popular method of organising churches. That has been the special claim of the Congregationalists.

On the other hand, the Presbyterians tell us that, because "presbyters" are mentioned in the New Testament, the Church should be ruled in accordance with their polity. Then the word "*episcopos*," meaning "bishop"—that is

overseer—also occurring in the New Testament, the Episcopalians claim that the Church should be organised and governed after their fashion. Then some churches are based on the peculiar method of what is claimed to be a sacrament, like baptism. Most of the churches, at any rate, claim that they have some advantage over all others in either quality or order or method of one kind or another; and each of them claims that it has the divine truth as to the terms of salvation for men.

Now, when we go back and carefully study the authentic records of the life and the teaching, the sayings, of Jesus in the New Testament, what do we find? We find that Jesus never organised or established any church at all; and there is not a single authentic word of his ever uttered concerning the founding or the organising or arranging of any church whatever.

In the second place, Jesus never set up any standards of doctrine for the guidance or government of his disciples, whether organised or unorganised; and he never made any particular intellectual beliefs the condition of entering any society, even the divine kingdom of heaven.

In the third place, Jesus never established any sacrament, whether two, as the Protest-

ants claim, or seven, as the Romanists insist. He never said a word about any sacrament whatever. And then, in the fourth place, it was the farthest possible, not only from fact, but from the spirit and letter and temper of all his teaching, that he should have appointed an authoritative successor to lord it over his disciples. Does he not say, and insist on it with all the power of his burning words: "It is the way of the peoples, the nations, the Gentiles, that their great ones exercise lordship, have authority over the people; but it shall not be so among you?" And yet it has been more so among those who have claimed definitely and emphatically to be his followers than it has been concerning any other despotism that has been established since the earth was made. "It shall not be so among you." Whoever shall be great among you, let him be your servant, your minister. He who is greatest is the servant of all.

If Jesus were present to-day he would wither, with the burning words he would utter, with the lightning flash of his speech, all the pretentious "princes of the church." I marvel, as I look at his words, how ever a petty priest on earth dares to arrogate to himself the title of "Father," "Father So and So," and the Pope,

the great father of them all, since Jesus says: "Let no one among you be called Rabbi, let no man be called Father: one is your Master, one is your Father, even in heaven; and all ye are brethren." That is the teaching, and the most emphatic teaching, of Jesus concerning this matter of power and authority among His disciples.

How did all this come about? In the most natural way, when we consider what kind of people men and women are, the historic background of things, the experiences of the past, —particularly when we remember how easily they forgot and disregarded the first commands of the Master in so many different directions. Rome was the seat of the Empire. When there came to be a church in Rome, a church in Antioch, churches in Galatia, all over the world, the church in Rome would naturally be looked upon as the great central church, because it was the church of the metropolis; and the man at the head of that church would naturally exert more power and influence than the one who was at the head of some small provincial church. We do the same thing in the nineteenth century as in the first. The minister of a great popular church in New York, if you come to a convention of ministers

to discuss any matter of order or doctrine, is sure to have more influence, other things being equal, than the minister of a small church in the country, who is more likely to keep in the background. So the bishop of Rome came to claim and exercise an immense power, simply because of his position.

By and by the seat of the empire moved to Constantinople, and the bishop of Constantinople began to think that he should have the greatest power in the empire. So East and West were pitted against each other; and out of that rivalry and struggle, as real as any political fight that has been known since the world began, coupled with certain differences of doctrine which are so slight that it is almost impossible for a Western mind to comprehend what they were about, came the split, and we have the Greek Church and the Roman Church, chiefly on account of the rivalries and struggles and strife of the bishops. Rome controlled and prevailed at last, so far as the principal part of the West was concerned, and became one of the most tremendous and most pitiless despotisms that the world has ever seen.

By and by comes the Protestant rebellion,—revolution in the interests of liberty; and

Luther goes to the Bible and resurrects it, and brings it into the life of the common people, and makes that his final court of appeal,—not because the Bible had ever made any claim to be such a court, but as an expedient against the Pope, against Rome. So we have our hundreds of Protestant churches, each one claiming that it is based on the Bible, and only illustrating the fact that the Bible is capable of being interpreted in a hundred different ways; and all these ways may be the result of honest intention, though not of very clear-headed judgment.

So here we come to find ourselves where we are, in the modern world, with these three great churches putting forth their claims, contradicting each other, and a hundred smaller churches that have sprung up and divided Protestantism among themselves. What is to be the outcome? Is the Church to pass away? Is it to have no more authority, no more power to play its great part in the life of the people?

There are those who tell us that science is to supersede it; literature is taking its place. People stay away from church and read instead of going to service, and say they get quite as much spiritual benefit as they could by going through what they call a "lifeless service" and

listening to a sermon not over-inspiring. They go out into the woods, and say they worship God through the glories and beauties of the natural world.

So there are springing up these claims for religious life and power over the lives of men. What is to become of the Church? Let us glance back a moment and study a few first principles and their world-wide human application. Religion—this we may plant ourselves upon as a changeless foundation—is the great central, universal, most important element in the life of the world. It has proved itself so in every century that can be historically studied. And from the beginning we have had religion organised in some sort of fashion. There has, at any rate, been a state religion, a tribal religion, a communal religion on the part of the people, some religion in which they united because they belonged to the same tribe or were of the same kinship, or related as citizens of the same city or country,—always has there been some great national religion in this sense. And besides this there has been a family religion. Among the Romans, for example, we have the religion of the Lares and Penates, the gods of the hearthstone and the gods of the larder,—the hearth and the food. These

were not missionary religions, but those which belonged to the family. The family, the city, or the state took part in these worships; but such have always existed; there has always been as much organisation as this.

Now, turning to the Hebrew people, we find the same ideas illustrated here. There was the national temple worship. As the law came to be written and the people came to regard it more and more highly, there sprang up the synagogue as an institution. Wherever there were ten or a dozen people, a synagogue might be organised; and in every little place, all over Palestine, it was found; and in larger places sometimes hundreds of them, as you will find a number of churches in a great modern city. This synagogue worship was for the study of the law, offering of prayers, teaching the people what was believed to be the religious and personal duties towards the divine Father of all. The synagogue, in the providential ordering of things, undoubtedly became the progenitor of the Church. If there had been no synagogue, there probably would not have been the Church; one succeeded the other.

So, when we study the life of Jesus, we find facts like these. I said Jesus organised no

church, said nothing about the importance of doctrine, established no sacraments. Why should he? It is almost impossible for us to put ourselves back in the atmosphere of that century. If Jesus be correctly reported, he himself expressly told those with whom he spoke that the world was to come to an end before the generation to which he was speaking had passed away, that he was to reappear in the clouds of heaven to establish miraculously the coming of the imminent kingdom of God. All the disciples believed this and taught it. The New Testament is saturated with the theme, on tiptoe with expectation. Paul writes about it; it is referred to in the speeches of the Acts of the Apostles; the Book of Revelation is full of it; it is everywhere in the New Testament. People believed that Jesus was coming immediately. If coming immediately, why establish a church to set forth doctrines or beliefs? Why appoint anybody lord and governor over a church which did not need to be organised?

But years went by; and the expected change did not come. Then what? Naturally, those who believed gathered themselves together in little groups. Naturally, some one was appointed to manage the meetings, which must

follow some particular order. Some one became chairman of the meeting. The elders, the presbyters, were elected to act, as having the most experience. So the *episcopos*, which simply means overseer, and all the organisations we know of, came into being.

The churches grew, the more prominent churches claimed and got more power, their leaders came to be leaders in the religious life of the time; and so, springing out of these common, ordinary, universal phases of human life there unfolded—through the last eighteen hundred years—the evolution of the life of the Church such as we know it—springing out of these same qualities of human nature with which we are familiar in other departments of life. So came the Church.

Is it to abide? I have said that religion is integral, central, universal, eternal. The most important fact about a man is that he is a religious being, vitally related to God, to the unseen Power, and bound by this fact as a child of God to all the other children of God, his brethren and his sisters. This is the most vital fact about him; this is the most central, most human fact in all our human life.

Now, then, it seems to me that the Church's unassailable, indisputable claim for life and

power, and for the loyalty, the hearty, loving, continuous allegiance of the people who appreciate and understand, is in the fact that man is a religious being, and that the most important thing about him is the fact that he is a spiritual child of God, and that the Church is the only organisation on the face of the earth that makes this its one end and aim,—to cultivate and develop man as a spiritual being, as a child of God ; to unfold his religious nature, to help develop his religious life.

Man, then, if he be a child of God, if he be a religious being, needs, more than he needs anything else, to have his religious nature cultivated and developed. And how is that done? In the first place there must be time, some special time given to it. If a man is going to be an artist, and there is no particular time that he devotes to learning his art, do you have much hope of him? Will he trust that it will come in some indefinite, indefinable way, whether he sets apart any particular time to devote to it or not? Suppose he is a lover of beauty : is it enough that he goes out and walks through the woods, and lets the beauty of the world play about him? Suppose he is a lover of music : is it enough that he listens to bird-songs and the waves on the seashore

and the tinkling of the brooks as they run down the hills to the sea?

Is this enough? You know perfectly well that if a man is to become an artist, it can be only by strenuous, patient work, day after day, week after week, year after year, endeavor, devotion. Even if a man be crowned with genius, it cannot take the place of hard work, although sometimes it has been said that hard work may take the place of genius. But, certainly, without either one or the other of them a musician or an artist is not likely to make much progress.

Do you think, then, that men are going to cultivate their religious natures by going out, as they say, under the stars, to be lifted by the general influences of nature; by going into the woods, because Bryant has said they were God's first temples; by playing golf in the midst of some beautiful scenery? I have no objection to playing golf, and playing it on certain parts of Sunday. I am not talking now about keeping Sunday. It is simply this: that the religious nature of man, if it is to be cultivated, must have some time, some specific, definite time devoted to it, and some specific, definite, patient, earnest effort.

Is it not worth while to have some particular

place? We say, "God is everywhere: He is anywhere." Of course He is. Why do you not say, I can love and remember my mother anywhere, or my dead wife, or my dead child? Why is it that you find yourself a thousand times more thrilled, touched, moved, in certain definite places associated with them, in a room where they used to live, in the presence of objects which they used to treasure? Why does a knife, or some little trinket that belonged to a dead friend, touch you and thrill you? Why not some other thing just as well?

Is it not a law of human nature that certain places, consecrated, associated with certain definite ideas and purposes and aims are helps, that they cannot be dispensed with? May not the same thing be true of religion?

Then, some method, some order. If the artist or the student in any direction is to attain proficiency in the work which he has undertaken, he must have some order, some method, some way to go about it. Is it not just as natural and simple that we should have some order, some method, some way in our worship, in the attempt to cultivate ourselves as spiritual beings, in the attempt to lift ourselves into the light of the higher life?

It seems to me, then, that the Church, as

an organisation, — having its place, its time, its methods or ways, — simply follows the precedent which has been established as good in every other department of human life. Association, for example. Can you not be just as good alone? What is the use of going to church? What is the use of joining a church, an alliance, a Sunday-school? What is the use of joining anything? Can you not be just as powerful, just as consecrated, alone? No, you cannot, and you know you cannot, in every other department of human life except religion. Why should you there? Let a man have an audience of ten thousand people, and each person shut in a cell by himself with an open place in front through which he can see the speaker, — cut off from his fellows, not able to exchange a touch or feel the thrill of any human companionship. Can you enthuse and fire and lift up that audience? You might as well talk to one man alone, and he sitting on an iceberg.

It is this touch of the common life, this idea that it is one people, thrilled through by feelings and emotions, that makes us able when we are together to be stirred, moved, lifted, more than when we are alone. Generals, military officers, have discovered this true in

regard to an army. Organise an army. Let soldiers keep step with each other, be thrilled by common music, see those ahead marching. You can move a column as you could not possibly move an individual.

Organisation in business. They are doing a great deal of work at the present time in regard to criticising trusts. The criticisms will wear out quicker than the trusts will, in my judgment; for it seems to me that they are nothing but a perfectly natural and inevitable example of those principles of organisation which are greater and more far-reaching as we grow more civilised. Organisation, then, is the mightiest power on the face of the earth; and a man becomes not simply one more. Each individual is multiplied by ten when they are all organised and touched and thrilled by a common life. Even a cipher becomes mighty when rightly related to other figures.

Then there is another consideration which seems to me immensely important in favor of the Church. We are engaged here at the present time in a specific, definite effort at a particular kind of reform. These waves of reform pass over us every little while; sometimes they attack one particular evil, sometimes another. Do they do permanent good?

I do not think that the methods that are used do a great deal of good. They help educate the people, they help lift up the level of the moral consciousness of the time. In that way they do good. But this is the point I wish to call to your attention. There never yet has been a legal device by which people could be forced to be any better than they wanted to be,—never in any department of life.

The one thing that is necessary in order to carry on reforms, and keep people reformed, is to make the individual men and women better men and women ; and there is no other way. The world, in spite of all that is said in regard to drink, is unspeakably more temperate to-day than it was a hundred years ago. Have the laws done much about it? I do not believe it. It is a matter of civilisation, a matter of public opinion, a matter of social ideals. A hundred years ago it was no disgrace for a man to fall under the table after dinner. To-day it would be a burning shame, from which he would never recover. Did the law do it? The law never touched it. The law, through changing the ideals of the people in regard to what is fitting, what is sweet, what is lovely, may have something to do with it, but not directly.

So the way to reform this world,—I have no objection to men's trying every other way they please,—but the only way permanently to reform the world is to make the men and women better men and women, so that you will not have to fence them out of this place or that by law, but so you can trust them around the corner and in the dark. And the Church is the only organisation on the face of the earth, the one distinct and definite aim of which is to make individual men and women better.

So in the industrial departments of life. Every little while they are talking about social reorganisation. The socialists think, if they could only organise society after this particular method or that, all the inequalities and evils of the world would be done away; and I find there are half a dozen different kinds of socialists, and each one believes that the other five are as wrong as the people who are not socialists at all. I believe they are all wrong. I believe that no reorganisation of society can make the particular men and women who are reorganised any better than they were before.

What you need for justice in the industrial departments of the world is to have the men and women, individually, personally, just. Then, any method, or no method at all, will be well.

So, politically, we have had a fancy that there was some magic in a republican form of government. If you could only get all the world republics, all the world would be free. Study some of the republics in Central and South America. Study some of the ancient forms of government that were called republican, and you will find there is just as much liberty, just as much justice, in any form of government as the individuals that make up that government want, and no more. There is no magic in the organisation.

Here, again, the only way to establish liberty and order politically over the world is to make the men and women of the world just and true, liberty-loving and orderly, and then —call it a despotism, if you will. If you have an angel for a despot, who cares? Call it a republic, if you will.

I speak of these extremes only that you may see that the one important thing is what men and women are. And again let me emphasise, and over and over, that the Church is the only institution on the face of the earth, the one definite aim and object of which is to make men and women better, better, better,—always better. By all this I do not mean that giving people better homes, better conditions, laws

more nearly equal—that these are of no importance. I only mean that back of and below all there is the man, and that permanent good rests on his personal improvement, however it be brought about.

The Church remain, then? The Church will remain, in my judgment, just as long as man remains a religious being. And the great object of the Church will be to create in the lives of people the spirit and temper of the Christ. That is the object of the Christian Church.

What was that? What was the spirit and temper and purpose of the Christ? I have said that it was not doctrinal; I have said it was not sacramental; it was not after the methods of authority practised by human organisation. It was love to God and love to man,—that love which serves, which believes in people and lifts people, and makes them worthy of believing in and loving. That is the method, the central idea and purpose of the Christ, the one great thing he lived for.

So, then, as this Church goes on in the future, is it very important what kind of government it has, what kind of organisation? I think that of very little importance. I have always been in favour myself of a democratic

form of government in the Church, because I am a democrat in my political ideas. It seems to me that the Church in America, that which has a right to claim itself to be *the* Church, ought to be in accordance with American methods and ideas,—that is, democratic,—a Church governed by the people, as we claim that the city, the state, the country, is governed by the people.

That is, the Church, as far as the order goes; but it is all a secondary matter. Organise in any way you please, so you use the power of that organisation to reproduce the Christ life in the world.

What about doctrines,—are they important? I believe they are very important, because they are either true or false; and if they are false, they mislead you if you follow them. But, fortunately, there are thousands of people who think they believe things that they never put in practice. It is very fortunate for the world that they do not. They put in practice a great deal better things than are in their creeds.

So the important thing here is, not what you put away off somewhere as a statement of what you think you ought to believe, whether you do or not, but what you really do believe and

carry out in your life. Believe what you please, but never do what Jesus never did, and never authorised anybody to do,—never put a belief at the front door of the Church as a fence to keep any wandering soul out. Open wide your fellowship, and do not welcome in the saints only,—they can get along outside; welcome in the sinners, those that need, the lost, those who ought to be helped.

The creed important, then? Yes, but not as important as your feeling and your life. How about rituals and sacraments? I said there are no sacraments in the sense in which the Church uses that word. But the Lord's Supper, baptism, rituals, printed prayers, ceremonies, processions, particular kinds of music, any of these things,—what are they? Why, use any of them? Use them all freely, if you like them, if they help you; but never dare to set them up as standards for other people; never dare put them in the place of things that are more important; never dare substitute them for life and service.

The Church—however organised, whatever it believes, whatever its order, its ritual—the Church exists to create the life, the Christ life, in the world; and when the Christ life is created there will be no more need of reformation

of vice or crime, there will be no more talk of industrial disputes and oppressions. There will be no more political corruption when the Christ life is dominant in the life of all the men and women in the world. Then we shall be one family—brothers and sisters, children of the same Father, each of us anxious not to get but to give, not to hurt but to help, not to pull down but to set up. We shall have established on earth the commonwealth of God.

XI

HELLS *

MY theme is Pagan and Christian—ancient and modern—ideas of hell.

This is not an agreeable theme. It is one from the treatment of which I should prefer to be excused. Perhaps you will not like to face it; and yet it seems to me that, as we are dealing with the great religious problems of the world, this, which has played a part, perhaps as great as any, cannot possibly be put one side.

I hardly dare put into the text some of the quotations which I have gathered, even of things that have been said by modern men. You would be shocked. You would perhaps question my right to trouble you with them. You would, at any rate, be disgusted with either the author of them or with me or with both. And, possibly with slight reference to them, I may push them, as we do other obscen-

* See Appendix, p. —.

ities and horrors, into an appendix, where people need not read them unless they desire.

When we go back and study the conditions of early human life, necessarily barbaric, we have no trouble in tracing the origin of the idea of hell. Revenge is one of the brutal instincts of the human race. It cannot always have its way in this world ; and so it is natural that it should, if possible, carry its execution over into the next. In the early conditions of human life, not so much was made of what we call wrongs between men and men. The moral ideals of the times were not very high, the distinctions not very fine.

The principal offences in those old days were supposed to be against the chiefs in this world, and the chiefs, deified and invisible, in the other. So that in the old-time hells—the hells of the barbaric conditions of the race—the severest punishments were for cases that we should call to-day *lèse majesté*, insults against the ruling power. An evil wrought to a fellow-man might not count as very serious. It might even be passed over altogether if it were supposed to be in the interest of the tribe or to redound to the honour of the god of the tribe. It might even become a cause for reward instead of punishment.

But, in all the specimens that we have that have come down to us from those old times, the most horrible penalties have been paid for wronging or insulting or not appreciating the gods, or the priests, the human representatives of the gods. For example, to give you an illustration—I do not give the extract: a woman is punished through countless ages in the most horrible fashion, because, purely through carelessness and by accident, when she was combing her head, she lets one of her hairs fall into the sacred butter, which was set apart to be burned as a part of the religious service. This is a specimen of the ideas of justice which were maintained in those far-off barbaric days. A student of Louis XI. and his dungeons of Loches, or later of the Bastile, ought hardly to wonder at what such people would make of another world.

If you turn to ancient Greece and Rome,—which is not so very far away from our civilisation,—you all remember Ixion and Tantalus and Sisyphus, typical cases of those who had been punished by the gods. You remember Prometheus, bound to his rock in Caucasus, while the eagle tears out and devours his heart. What were their offences? Not human immoralities, as we regard them, at all. They were

being punished for slighting or insulting the heavenly powers. And these punishments, that the ancient world devised, were for how long?

I cannot stop to note the cases from China, from India, from Persia, from all over the world. Substantially the same type prevailed throughout the ancient pagan world. The same barbaric ideas were manifest. But how long were their hells to last? I give you one illustration. One of the writers says: "Suppose a small yoke were thrown into the sea, and were to drift about for countless ages in the ocean; and suppose that some time in that ocean, somewhere, there was a blind tortoise who was to live on, age after age, and once in a hundred thousand years was to be permitted to come to the surface. What would the chances be of his coming up at just the right time and place, so that his neck would be thrust through that yoke? When that happened, possibly punishments would end." You see the pagans had a little hope. Their ideas of time are inconceivably long; and all the Oriental luxuriance of their imagination is lavished in an attempt to picture the horrors and tortures of this invisible world. But in every pagan nation on earth there was left one tiny ray of hope,—never an endless hell, until you come

to Christianity—never, in all the world. This is the gift to the race of the Semite people.

Christianity and Mohammedanism, which sprung out of substantially the same racial characteristics, and which had much in common,—these two have given us the endless hells. I shall come to touch upon that matter a little later.

Let us now turn and consider the doctrine of the Old Testament. I said this gift of endless hells had come to us from Semitic peoples. And yet, strangely enough, throughout the Mosaic dispensation in the Old Testament there is no teaching of anything of the kind. There is not a place in the Old Testament where "hell" has any reference whatever to a place of torment in the spirit world. The original for it is the Hebrew "Sheol," and in the early Hebrew history they did not even have any Sheol. The worst punishment in the Old Testament that is ever threatened against evil is death. That means physical death here in this world. All that they cared for, — the blessings of life, the delights, the joys of seeing the sun in the heavens and the trees and the green fields, and hearing the rippling of the waters, looking into the faces of friends, of wife and

children, of being recognised by their fellow-townsmen, holding honourable positions, winning wealth and fame,—these were the things that the Hebrew desired; and death meant the loss of them all. But it meant nothing, after you had passed the line into the shadow. No future punishment in the Old Testament!

When we come to the new one, Paul is a distinct and definite Universalist. He teaches it with perfect clearness. After a certain time, after the trials and temporary punishments and wanderings of the people, they are all,—those who reject Christ now and those who accept him,—they are to be brought to his acceptance and to share the glories of his kingdom. Then, by and by, that kingdom is to be given up to God, the Father; and He is to be all in all. That is the culmination of things, as Paul teaches it; and he, as you will remember, is the first of the New Testament writers, and that is why I refer to him first.

The Gospels were compilations of material slowly gathered in the course of a good many years, and at last brought into the shape in which they now exist by utterly unknown hands. Nobody knows who wrote either one of them. We cannot be absolutely certain, then, of a single text in the New Testament—

that it is in the precise shape in which it fell from the lips of Jesus. We can only be sure in the main, surer than anything else, of the words that the Apostle Paul himself wrote; for, presumably, they have been transmitted to us accurately, except now and then where there was a mistake made by a copyist. Probably very few dogmatic changes were made in his teachings.

What, then, was the attitude of Jesus? Jesus uses language which is very strong. He speaks of what we have translated as eternal life and eternal death. There is opportunity, I think, for divided opinion as to the real teaching of Jesus on the subject of the duration of future punishment. There is a chance for an honest man to have a doubt. Yet I incline strongly to the belief that he did not teach it; for these words that are translated "everlasting" and "eternal" are used in no end of places where they cannot mean literally "endless." The mountains are called *aionian;* and everyone knows that they will come to an end. And many other things which are limited as to time have this one adjective applied to them.

I believe, then, that Jesus does not teach eternal or absolutely endless punishment, but

that he speaks of it in this indefinite way as belonging to the *aionian* time. The New Testament speaks about this present "æon" and the next "æon." In all these cases the words cannot mean endless. I am inclined to believe, then, that Jesus uses these words indeterminately, as was the custom of the time, and that, being an Oriental, he indulged in figures of speech, as he taught in parables, which is the Oriental custom.

Mozoomdar, the famous leader of the Brahmo-Somaj in India, speaking about Jesus, said these remarkable and significant words: "You Westerners do not understand him. He was an Oriental. We Orientals do understand him. You make an Englishman of him."

We take these poetical, legendary statements, figures of speech, and harden them down into actual matters of fact. This is my belief in regard to the teaching of Jesus. It seems to me to receive confirmation from the fact that Paul was a Universalist. Paul would hardly have taught such a doctrine if he had known that Jesus taught the opposite.

Then, when we come to Origen, one of the most famous of the early Greek Fathers of the Church, he was distinctly and definitely an out-and-out Universalist. Would he have

been, could he have been, if Jesus had given any plain teaching the other way? For we know that Origen believed that Jesus was a supernatural and divine being, an infallible teacher?

But soon we are plunged into another era. We come to the days of Tertullian. He was one of the Latin Fathers, living in the North of Africa. He had been persecuted; and he was one of those men who are capable of bitter resentment. I wish to quote you what is typically his way of looking at the question of everlasting punishment, which he expected to be meted out to his enemies. I quote:

"At this greatest of all spectacles, the last and eternal judgment, how shall I admire, how laugh, how rejoice, how exult, when I behold so many proud monarchs groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness; so many magistrates liquefying in fiercer flames than they ever kindled against the Christians; so many sage philosophers blushing in red-hot fires, with their deluded pupils; so many tragedians more tuneful in the expression of their own sufferings; so many dancers tripping more nimbly from anguish than ever before from applause!"

This is old Tertullian, one of the most famous of the Church Fathers; and you can see how little pity there was in his heart. He shared undoubtedly the feeling that Bishop

Burnet has preserved for us in a quotation from the words of Queen Mary of England:

"As the souls of heretics are hereafter to be eternally burning in hell, there can be nothing more proper than for me to imitate the divine vengeance by burning them on earth."

An ample justification of persecution! This came rapidly to be the general tone of utterance. On this basis of eternal wrath, that the Church held the keys and ability to open or shut heaven to whomsoever it pleased,—and it generally pleased to open heaven only to those who were submissive to its own dictates of authority,—you can imagine what power the Church wielded throughout the Middle Ages.

The man who was forbidden the sacrament believed that he was shut forever out of heaven, and imprisoned forever in hell. What power, then, did the Pope wield, when a king of England, or no matter where he might be, showed any signs of revolting against his authority? He could issue a bull, forbidding the Church to administer the sacraments to the common people; and the people in their fright would rise and overturn the throne if the king did not submit to the papal dictation. This was the power that for hundreds of years was wielded by the Pope.

In the old classic days, suppose Jupiter had come down from Olympus, chosen some man, and given him the thunderbolt to hurl at any one he pleased, how the whole earth would have cowered at his feet! This was the power possessed by the Pope.

You are familiar with the Middle-Age picture of hell, as Dante has given it to us by his supreme genius. On the gate is written, "Leave hope behind all ye who enter here." And then inside are the unbaptised babies, virtuous heathen,— because they had never heard of Christ, never had a chance to hear,— and all those who had not submitted to the Church, enduring every kind of horror that the imagination of the poet could devise or depict. Similar is the picture of hell that Milton has given. And, when the time came for the Protestant rebellion against the Pope, there was no rebellion against the doctrine of hell. The Protestants were all to be sent to hell by the Pope for rebelling against the Church; and they were to send everybody to hell who did not accept their authority, the Pope and his followers included.

It was simply not a reformation of hell, a reformation of the ideas of God's justice, but a change of venue, the transfer of power from

one set of hands to another. For some of the very worst conceptions of hell that have ever been penned have come from Protestant preachers, and not very ancient ones, either.

Jeremy Taylor, the author of the famous *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying*, two books of exquisite devotion, and who is called the "Shakespeare of divines," — because of his wonderful mastery of English — has written one of the worst descriptions of hell with which I am acquainted.

Jonathan Edwards—you know his reputation in that direction — I will not quote. Words have no power to say anything worse about God than Edwards has said. The poets, too, have found in this subject an inspiration for their dismal, horrible songs.

But is this all ancient? When I speak of these matters sometimes people say to me: "But this was a good while ago. Nobody believes it now. Nobody says these things today." People were never more mistaken in their lives than in holding that opinion. These doctrines are still in the Prayer Book of the Episcopal Church. In the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, even to the damnation of infants, they are all there. I am perfectly well aware that the ministers here in New York do

not preach them very often. But I am also aware—and so you may be—that, if a young man applies to enter the ministry, and is found to be unsound in regard to this doctrine, he may not get in.

A lady here in New York this winter heard a Baptist minister threatening his young people in a revival sermon. He told them that, if they did not repent, they were likely to *be struck dead;* or that God might open the gates of hell, *and let them hear the shrieks and groans of the damned.* This in New York city, this very winter!

It was only a little while ago that the American Board, representative of the Congregational Church, the most liberal of liberal orthodox churches in this country, refused to send a man as a missionary to Japan,—not because he taught universal and eternal salvation, for he did not do that—they would not send him— Why? Because he wondered—he did not assert it even—as to whether there might be a chance in the next world for a man who had had no chance in this. And the Congregationalists would not let him go as a missionary because he had that doubt in his mind.

Professor Park, one of the most famous theological professors that this country has

produced in two hundred years, when this discussion was raging, said: We must hold to the belief in everlasting punishment, because, if you take that away, you "cut the nerve of missions." When I was a boy I used to go to a missionary concert once a month, and be taught that the heathen were pouring, like a Niagara torrent, day and night, year by year, into the abyss of hell, and that we must rouse ourselves and give more money and send more people to save them. This is the doctrine still believed to-day.

I have been on a tour during this last week trying to hunt up certain of these things. You go to the headquarters of the Presbyterian publishers in this city, or the Methodist Book Concern, or the Baptist publishers, or go to Funk & Wagnalls, where they keep the books that are called for by these different denominations all over the country, and you will find them saturated with this doctrine of hell everywhere.

The worst thing Jonathan Edwards ever said is still published by one of the branches of the Baptist Publishing House as a tract for distribution at five cents a copy. These things only ancient?—only in some far-off place? While I am on this matter, I must give you just a brief extract. It is quoted from one

of the sermons of the man who during his lifetime preached to more people than any other man on the face of the earth. He quietly remarked to a friend: I am not proud of it; but if I were inclined to pride I might point to the fact that I have never yet found on the face of the earth a hall or church large enough to hold the people who want to come and hear me whenever I speak. And he was a preacher in the city which is the centre of the world's civilisation. I refer to Spurgeon, of London, of course. Now let me give you a few words. I will not quote them all. They are too bad.

"Thou wilt sleep in the dust a little while. When thou diest, thy soul will be tormented alone,—that will be a hell for it,—but at the day of judgment thy body will join thy soul; and then thou wilt have twin hells. Body and soul shall be together, each brimful of pain, thy soul sweating in its inmost pore drops of blood, and thy body from head to foot suffused with agony; conscience, judgment, memory, all tortured; but more, thy head tormented with racking pains, thine eyes starting from their sockets with sights of blood and woe, thine ears tormented with

'Sullen moans and hollow groans,
And shrieks of tortured ghosts';

thine heart beating high with fever, thy pulse rattling at an enormous rate in agony, thy limbs crackling like the martyrs on the fire and yet unburnt; thyself

put in a vessel of hot oil, pained, yet coming out undestroyed; all thy veins becoming a road for the hot feet of pain to travel on; every nerve a string on which the devil shall ever play his diabolical tune of Hell's Unutterable Lament; thy soul for ever and ever aching, and thy body palpitating in unison with thy soul."

Those things are being preached and circulated as tracts, in order to scare people into a certain way of religious belief all over the world to-day. I bought this copy at Funk & Wagnalls just this last week on purpose for this extract.

The New School Presbyterian Church recognises the fact, and expresses wonder that God does not save more, but supposes He is saving just as many as he cares to. Dr. Gardner Spring, who used to be the minister of the Brick Church here on Fifth Avenue, was asked one day why God did not save more. And he said, "Because He saves just as many as he chooses, I suppose."

And then Hopkins, one of the famous old Puritan preachers, goes on to describe how the sight of this pain will add to the happiness of heaven. And Jonathan Edwards declares that a part of the glory and happiness of the saints in heaven would be taken away if hell were destroyed.

Dr. Momerie, a preacher in London, still living — a famous preacher of the Church of England,—tells us he heard a man preach, only a few years ago, a sermon in which he said that the sight of all these things would only increase the joy of those who were saved.

And so I might go on giving you these extracts, until you were wearied of reading them and your souls filled with horror.

I want to touch for one moment more on the question of infant damnation. The Bishop of Toronto said, not long ago, that every child of humanity, except the Virgin Mary, is from the first moment of conception, months before it is born, a child of wrath, hated by the blessed Trinity, belonging to Satan, and doomed to hell. That is the Catholic Bishop of Toronto.

Some of you, at any rate, are familiar with the famous poem called the "Day of Doom," published in Massachusetts in old Puritan days — very popular, having an enormous circulation. In it the non-elect infants are represented at the judgment day as arguing with God over what seems to them the hardship of their fate. They pleaded, very naturally, that they had committed no sins—they had not done anything wrong. The only thing that

they were responsible for, the only thing that they were going to be punished for — certainly they were not responsible for it — was because they were born descendants of Adam. This was frankly acknowledged; and yet God is represented as saying to them (I quote one verse, and part of another) :—

"You sinners are, and such a share
As sinners may expect,
Such you shall have; for I do save
None but my own elect.
Yet, to compare your sin with their
Who lived a longer time,
I do confess yours is much less,
Though every sin 's a crime.

"A crime it is, therefore in bliss
You may not hope to dwell;
But unto you I shall allow
The easiest room in hell."

That was all that could be found for an infant who it was confessed had never done anything wrong.

The Roman Catholic Church has taught such doctrine. I will print it as an appendix. I will not offend your eyes by placing it here. It is too horrible,— doctrines describing the punishment of children in hell.

And here a little while ago,—you say this is ancient, far away, nobody believes it now,—within six years, a branch of the High Church in England published a catechism for children, describing the horrible tortures that children suffer in hell because they did not come to the minister for confession,— nothing else. That is the kind of doctrine that is preached and taught by some High-Church ministers in England to-day. This only proves what I have said a great many times, that the world only gets civilised very slowly, and only in some few places at that.

Once in a while you hear a note, at least, of pity. I love to remember Dr. Albert Barnes, the famous old Presbyterian minister of Philadelphia. His *Notes* I used in studying my Sunday-school lessons when I was a boy. I thought then that he was a wise man. I believe still that he was. He has left it on record not that he doubted this eternal punishment, but the heartbreak with which he felt himself compelled to teach it. He said : "Other people may find something to relieve the intensity of their grief over it. But, when I look over the world and see so many people going to hell, and see that God does not save any more of them, I am amazed and dumb ; and it is all

dark — dark — dark to my soul." I love the old man for going even so far as that.

Now, there had to be this lurid background. But let us turn to something a little more reasonable—a little more hopeful. Why shall we accept any such doctrine as this? Why shall we not revolt and fight, with every fibre of our intellectual and moral being aflame with indignation, against the barbarism of men and the horrors that they have piled up, with which to blacken, if possible, the face of the Almighty? Let me say, if anything of this sort be true, ought not God, at any rate, to have told the world of it so plainly that there could have been no possible mistake? But there has been confusion on the question and dispute about it from the very first, so that there is no clear revelation on the subject. If we are in such a condition as this, ought He not to have told us some reasonable explanation of that fact?

What explanation have we? We have an old Persian fable, which the Jews did not even originate, and did not know anything about for hundreds of years, and which tells us an utterly childish and incredible story of the whole human race being damned because Eve influenced Adam to eat the apple of a particular tree. The Almighty condescends to give us

only that,—coming round about through Persia, after this world had been in existence thousands and thousands of years, and millions and millions of souls had been going down to hell because they had not even heard that much?

If we are in this kind of condition, ought we not to be told plainly how to get out of it? Are we? Has there been any revelation to explain? The Greek Church will tell you one way; the Catholic another. Forty Protestant Churches will tell you forty other ways. Paul tells you one thing; Jesus tells you another thing. Nobody tells you anything with authority; so that the most honest, reverent, tender-hearted and loving man in the world cannot find which way he ought to go, to secure salvation for himself or power to lead his brother or friend into a way that is safe. Here is the actual condition of things.

Then, another consideration. Ultimately, if God be Almighty, and if He be all-wise,—let me say it with all the reverence with which I can utter myself,—He and He alone, in the last analysis, is responsible for this universe. Did He create creatures that He could not control? Then is He God? Did He create creatures that He could control and would not? What

right had He? At common law, you here in New York, I here in New York, any man, in England or America, is held to be legally and morally responsible for causes that he sets in motion. And he has no right to set a cause in motion that he cannot control, so that it shall result in no end of evil to others. Shall not the God of all the earth do as right as the common law expects us to do?

What would be capable of proving it? Such a doctrine of hell as has been preached for nearly two thousand years? What would be capable of proving it? On what authority could I conceive myself as accepting it? If it were printed in letters of fire on every page of the Bible,—the clear declaration printed as Jonathan Edwards or old Doctor Hopkins or Spurgeon might have written it? Would I believe it? No! I would not believe any statement, or any Bible, or any million Bibles, that turns my God into an incarnate devil. I cannot conceive of any being so utterly foul and horrible, so utterly to be detested, so utterly to be scorned and spurned by every decent man, as the God capable of creating hell as these men have pictured it. All the criminals of earth rolled into one would be a character white when placed beside him by con-

trast. For He—almighty, all-wise—can do as he will—and does this? As Tennyson sings:—

"The god of love and hell together—he cannot be thought;
If there be *such* a god may the *great* God curse him and bring him to naught."

I am aware that there are men at this present time in the old churches who are repudiating these ideas. Dr. George A. Gordon, of the Old South Church in Boston, is frankly an out-and-out Universalist, and scorns these things as I do. Dr. Lyman Abbott holds a curious and to me utterly inexplicable position by saying that he believes God will save every human soul that He *can*; but he wonders whether He has not made them so free that they can do as they please in spite of God. If He has, I wonder why he prays to God to save them. It seems to me that the position is utterly illogical, irreconcilable, utterly immoral, confounding that which is true with that which is fable. Here are these doctrines, indorsed and proclaimed in the effort to get up revivals all over this country,—all over Europe. They are the mainspring, motive force, of those who are engaged in these operations.

Is there anything to prove this doctrine to me? If it were written in letters of stars

across the face of the heavens, I would rather believe that the universe was one infinite madhouse—that we were misreading the facts, or that there were no facts, that all was one horrible mockery—than that God, almighty, allwise, all-loving, could do such things as they have said He has done.

If I am mistaken, and if by and by, when I pass through the gate and into the shadow, I am haled before the judgment throne, and charged with misrepresenting the truth as God has revealed it to men, even then I will take my cue from the author of Job, and say : " Let me plead my cause at His feet." O Father, I believed Thee better than they said ; and, if I must be damned forever for believing Thee good, then let me go with this conviction into the outer darkness. I believed in Thee ; and, though Thou dost slay me, still I do believe in Thee !

One other point I must deal with. Is there no punishment for sin ? Certain people have made such horrible representations of this arbitrary, unnatural punishment that people react from that to unlimited and unbridled license. Punishment ? Is there no punishment for sin in this world ? Is there no punishment for wrong-doing here ? Is there no

punishment in the nature of things? The writer of that text, Paul, knew what he was saying, when he uttered, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Here is the principle in the light of which the rational hell must be conceived and described, and by every wise man must be averted. Punishment in the sense of outside arbitrary infliction—never, anywhere. There is no such thing in the universe. Reward, as an outside, arbitrary gift? Again, no trace of it anywhere in the universe. The old Jews thought that God paid people for being good by giving them a long life, a lot of wives and children, a lot of good cattle, and honor and prosperity. They found that it was not true. They believed, at first, that, if a man did wrong, he was punished by being made sick, or his property being taken from him, or his children, or by being disgraced in the public eye, or some such thing. But years went by; and they found that that was not true. They came at last face to face with the fact that bad men get rich and bad men seem to have a fine time in certain directions, and that good men are poor and that good men can be diseased in body and suffer. And they had to revise all their conceptions. They found after a time

what we are beginning to find out,—for it is very modern, indeed,—that there is no such thing in the world as God giving a man something because he is good, or taking something away from him because he is bad, in the common, arbitrary use of those terms. What takes the place of that? Laws unchanging and results inevitable! That is what we have got to face in this universe in which we find ourselves.

Take this body of mine. I break a law of health. What does that mean? I break one of the conditions; every part of my body is hemmed in with forces and facts and conditions which I call the laws of my body. If I keep inside them, I am well. And, if I am well, the action, the performance of every function of my body is a joy. It is a pleasure to breathe, if my lungs are in good order. If they are diseased, it is distress and anguish. It is pleasant to see, if my eyes are as they ought to be. Otherwise, it is a pain to open them, and let the light strike them. So, if I keep within the laws of my body in every direction, am I rewarded? Not in the sense of having an arbitrary gift bestowed upon me, but a certain result inveitably follows; and it is a good result—health, and all the pleasure and power that come from being well.

Suppose I break one of the laws, no matter whether on purpose or by accident. Suppose I take arsenic, not knowing it is arsenic. Suppose I step on a place in the sidewalk, thinking it is solid, and it gives way, and I break my leg. I am not morally to blame, but the law of my body has been broken, and pain results. And it is the inevitable result.

Now just take that illustration, and carry it all the way up through your intellectual nature, your moral nature, your spiritual nature,—the relation in which you stand or ought to stand to your fellow-men,—the relation in which you ought to stand to God. We can imagine an ideal state of society. We can imagine a man so circumstanced that the air about him, the earth, the plants, the grass—everything should minister to his delight and power; that his house should be so built that every need and want and pleasure should be met; that he should be so surrounded by friends, so related to his fellow-men in business, that everything should minister to that which is good. He would be perfectly happy. He is in heaven, we say. That shows, of course, that heaven is not essentially a particular place.

You take a man who is diseased, who is disordered in every sort of way, and put him into

a beautiful garden. Does the beautiful garden make him happy? You never can get into any more of heaven in this world or any other than you first get into yourselves. You must stay in the hells you make for yourselves just as long as you choose to keep busy making them. In other words, never in this world or any other world will you be able to escape yourselves. Never in this world or any other world will you be able to escape the terrible shadow of your own actions.

You remember that Oriental apologue of the soul newly arrived in the other life, who is flitting on through dim and shadowy spaces, and hearing footsteps pursuing, turns, and sees a shape that is full of dread and horror to him. He stops, and says, "What art thou?" And the answer comes: "I am thine own actions. Day and night I follow thee." There is the real hell of the real universe, ordained by the real God, absolutely inevitable; and there is no getting out of it in this world or any other world, whether you stay in it one year or a million years, except by getting yourselves right. For right means heaven, and wrong means hell.

Omar Kháyyám says, as translated by Edward Fitzgerald:

"Heaven but the vision of fulfilled desire,
And hell the shadow of a soul on fire."

And Milton dives deeper into reality than the popular meaning of his poem when he makes Satan say, "Myself am hell." He cannot flee from himself. So the only way for us to escape the only real hell, of which these others are horrible, blasphemous caricatures, is for us to escape everything selfish, everything wrong, every transgression of every condition of high, honorable, and true living; and, escaping these, we become wrought over at last into the perfect image of the Divine.

XII

HEAVENS

AS was said in the last chapter concerning human beliefs as to sufferings in a future condition, so it may be said in this that our beliefs in coming joys spring naturally out of human thinking and feeling. People have always been conscious of the fact that life did not meet their ideals ; they have felt that they had not attained the things which they desired ; and, while sometimes they have been obliged to confess that this failure was their own fault, perhaps more frequently they have been ready to bring some charge against the nature of things, and say that without any fault of their own they had suffered and failed.

And whether this has been true concerning themselves or not, as they have looked abroad over the face of society, they have seen here a man apparently rewarded who did not deserve it, and here some one suffering, passing through a life of deprivation and trial, who, so

far as any one could find out, was God's saint. The suffering has seemed to be entirely undeserved.

And so there has sprung up in the heart of man, as naturally as the grasses and flowers grow in spring, the belief that sometime and somewhere these inequalities were to be equalised; the people who deserved to suffer would suffer, the people who deserved to be happy would be happy. If the universe were just, so they have reasoned, it is inevitable that this should be. And as they have not always seen these equalities brought about during the brief span of our human life, and as they have generally believed in a continued life beyond the grave, they have felt that these rectifications were only being postponed—that over yonder, somewhere, wherever the place of good or evil might be located, things would be made to come right.

By a process of reasoning like this—natural, I say, as the opening of a flower in May—the beliefs have come to pass. But, as to the nature of these heavens, we shall see that another principle has been at work which has determined whether they shall seem to us to-day high or low, worthy or unworthy. They have been governed—these imaginings, these

picturings—by the intellectual, the imaginative, the pictorial capacity of the people. Heaven has been made up of the things which the majority of the people has desired, has chiefly valued.

Take our North American Indian, and the kind of heaven that most of us would be anxious for would not seem to be the one that he longs for and dreams about. Perhaps Pope, in that well-worn passage of his, has given us a satisfactory picture of what this type of man would think of and desire. Pope is looked upon sometimes as worn out as a poet, and yet in the dictionaries of quotations you will find there are more passages taken from him to-day than from any other English poet except Shakespeare. He had a marvellous mastery of expression. Read over ten or a dozen lines, which will seem trite, perhaps; but the passage, as a whole, is one of the finest:

> "Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutor'd mind
> Sees God in clouds, or hears Him in the wind;
> His soul proud science never taught to stray
> Far as the solar walk or milky way;
> Yet simple nature to his hope has given
> Behind the cloud-topp'd hill an humbler heaven;
> Some safer world, in depth of woods embraced,
> Some happier island in the watery waste,
> Where slaves once more their native land behold,

No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold :
To be, contents his natural desire,
He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire,
But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
His faithful dog shall bear him company."

There is the natural heaven of the man who is on that intellectual and imaginative plane.

We turn for another type, and we find the Norseman. He, during his life, if he were physically strong enough, was, above all things, a warrior. And they, like most, I think, of their descendants, were capable drinkers. The Norseman's desire was to fight, and to have plenty of stimulating mead to drink. So his heaven was the halls of Walhalla, where he could drink and fight all day long, be hewed into I do not know how many pieces, and yet be in condition to go through the same thing another day. This was his idea of bliss.

The Oriental, such as the Mohammedan dream appeals to, makes his heaven out of a harem embowered in flowers that never fade and fragrance that never palls. And so you will find different grades and types of humanity dreaming of finding in the other world the things which they desire.

In classic Greece and Rome nobody went to heaven, in the modern sense of that word.

That is, nobody went to live where the gods were, except now and then a famous hero, chosen as a favourite by some one of the celestial powers. Where did they go? To the Islands of the Blest, far away, towards the sunset; they went to the Elysian Fields in the underworld. And what did they do? They remembered the world they had lost. They lived over in shadowy fashion their old pleasures and aims; philosophers discussed, poets read their verses. But, on the whole,—there was nothing they looked forward to, nothing bright, or cheery, or hopeful to them; for Homer makes Achilles describe this underworld as a place anything but desirable. He says he would rather be a keeper of swine on earth than to be the king of all the underworld.

So this underworld life has never been specially desirable; and it certainly to-day does not satisfy the dreams of the thinker who dares to believe that there is a heaven somewhere to be found for those who have lived and wrought nobly for their fellows here below the stars.

When we come to consider the attitude of the Old Testament towards it,—as we must, in tracing up from the beginning the heaven of to-day,—we find (as I have had occasion to point out before and more than once in other con-

nections), that the early Hebrew writers had no belief in continued existence after death. But the punishments in the Old Testament, and the rewards,— this is substantially true,— take account simply of this life. "Hell," as you know, never means a place of torture, but only a shadowy, underground abode. It comes from the same root from which is also derived our word "hole," or "hollow," a scooped-out place, a cavern. So heaven is always a place above the stars.

But, in the Old Testament, death is the punishment for extreme wrong-doing; and life,— life prolonged, life honoured, life enriched, life made happy by many children, life filled with all the things that men care for,— this is the greatest reward that is ever offered for goodness. And the deprivation of these is the worst thing that is ever threatened in the way of punishment.

And yet there came about—and note how natural the steps—a radical change of belief. The Hebrews came after a time to believe in the coming of a Messiah, some one who was to give their people dominance and power all over the world, when they were faithful enough to their God; and there were people who held this faith, cherished it, and looked forward to

the coming of this Messiah, who were dying one after another, age after age. And this did not seem just. They said, The people who have believed in and anticipated the coming of the Messiah ought to share in his glory when he does come. They have sacrificed for him, suffered for him, believed in him. May we not believe that they will share in His triumph? So they came to believe that the good people who had believed in and laboured for the Messiah would be raised from the underground world, and be a part of his victory when he came.

Out of this idea sprang the belief in the resurrection of the just among the ancient Hebrews; and by and by they came to hold the idea that these people were not quite dead, not really dead. They were in a shadowy, underground world, which they called Sheol. And after a time they came to believe that the bad people were not dead either. They, also, were in this underground Sheol; and they also were to be raised up and see the triumph of the just, and so be punished for their wickedness and unbelief, and then sent back to the shadows again.

This came to be the popular faith; and so, when Jesus came, there existed in the minds

of the Jewish people this land of Sheol, underneath the surface of the earth, divided into two parts,—Paradise, where the good souls were, and Gehenna, where the bad were. Hades is a Greek translation of Sheol, covering the whole underground world. Paradise and Gehenna were close together, the dividing line not wider than a hair. This was the belief at the time of John the Baptist; and when Jesus said to the penitent thief on the cross, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," he did not mean heaven; he meant the paradise-side of Sheol, or Hades, in this underground world. For that is where Jesus went down to hell; and the old doctrine of the early Church was not that he went there as to a place of punishment, but to the underground regions, as did any other human soul.

And you must note that up to this time in the history of the Hebrew people only two men had gone to heaven,—Enoch and Elijah. It is very curious that the Bible, when speaking of them, says in neither case that they went to heaven, where God is; but the popular tradition was that they did. They were the only two.

Jesus went down to this underground world, and preached to the people in Hades, —

preached to the wicked, preached to the good, and announced to them the coming of the kingdom of God and their resurrection ; and the tradition is that, when he left this underground world, he led, the old Hebrew phrase is, "captivity captive,"—that is, he led a multitude of these captives who had been there since they had died, some of them since the beginning of the world, and took them up with him on high to the presence of God and the angels. It was only after that that anybody ever began to go to heaven, in the modern sense of that term.

I need not go into these matters in any detail. I want simply that you should understand the growth of the doctrine ; for you cannot comprehend the significance and meaning of the different phases of belief that are held to-day unless you know how they have come into existence.

After the time of Jesus, after the time had passed by when they looked for his resurrection, they still held that there was a multitude of these souls waiting, for an indefinite time, in the underworld for the second coming of Jesus, on which occasion they were to be raised from the dead. And this suggests a point that you need very carefully to note,—the resurrec-

tion of Christ, the resurrection of any soul, in early discussions of religious questions did not necessarily or primarily have any reference to the coming out of the grave of the body. It was the coming out of this underworld of the soul,—the real person coming up out of this place and ascending on high and being with God and His angels.

You are familiar, in a general way, with the descriptions of the early Christian times of this perfect condition. Saint John, as tradition has it, was imprisoned on Patmos. As a matter of fact, nobody knows who wrote this book of Revelation. It is held by many of the best scholars to be an old Hebrew production, which was wrought over by Christian hands. Whether John was the author of it, a person named John, or whether this John was our apostle John, nobody knows; and, of course, it does not matter. But the vision represents the ideally perfect condition of the people who have come up from the lower world, and who have shared in the expected resurrection, have met the Lord in the air, and have been transformed into his beauty. This perfect city was a perfect cube. They lavished on its description everything that they could think of in the way of beauty and glory. It had streets of gold, a river running

through the midst of it, beautiful trees bearing fruit every month, whose leaves were for the healing of the nations,—everything that the poetic power of the time could fancy was used in setting forth the wonder of this city.

And yet you will note one limitation about it,— a limitation I shall have to refer to again in a moment. I fear, if I must think of the city as thus described, I should get tired of the place after a little. I cannot imagine myself wanting to walk on and look at streets of gold, a lake that looked like glass, the same kind of trees everywhere you turn. The only art that is referred to is music,— no ordinary human occupations are assigned to anybody. I should long sometimes to get through the gates and into the country, if there was a country, to find a change of scene.

I speak of this simply to show the limitations of the faculty of anybody who attempts to describe a thing like perfect bliss.

And here note, before we go any farther,—it is a good deal easier to describe suffering and make it interesting than it is to describe happiness and make it interesting. You can describe a whole round of tortures, and each one will be utterly distinct from the rest, and you feel every pang. But can I describe twelve

kinds of enjoyment, so as to make them distinct and perfectly clear to the imagination, so that one would not get a little tired of it before we were through?

Now, I do not know what sort of humiliatting confession I may be making; but I am going to say that I have read Dante, or tried to read him, several times. I have always been intensely interested in his Inferno; it seems human in spite of its horror; it seems real. I was less interested in the Purgatory; it seemed less real to me, somehow, less human; and I have always found it intensely difficult to stay in his heaven long enough to get through with it. It may be all my fault; but I have found it too tenuous, too intangible, to touch me as a human being, to come within range of human thoughts and human occupations.

And very much the same is true in regard to Milton. Milton's hell is intensely interesting; and Satan is, in interest and power, so much beyond any of the other characters, that some of his critics have said he was evidently his hero; and that Milton himself, being something of a rebel, sympathised with this arch, gigantic rebel of the universe, at least on the rebel side of him. He makes him terribly human. But Adam, the angels,—there never seemed to me

any human projections about them that I could hang any interest on.

And so I have concluded that it is exceeding difficult to describe happiness in such a way as to make it very real. You know there is a saying that "the happy woman has no history." The stream of happiness flows on so smoothly that there are no breaks, no ripples, no cataracts to record, little to write about. Suppose you describe her happiness yesterday, all the experiences she went through and that she enjoyed intensely; the very breathing of the air was joy, the fragrance of the flowers was joy, the gleam of the eastern sky as the sun was coming up was joy; but can you describe it, can you make it real, tangible, to people? And, particularly, if the next ten or fifteen days are very much the same, can you describe them so as to make them different from the rest, so as to give a detailed picture of happiness, and make it mean much to anyone?

So I have hunted through the descriptions of heaven which I have been able to find, from beginning to end; and I find that up to the present time the writers have not succeeded in making them interesting to me. Take the writer of the old hymn — I thought I should be able to recall his name, but I have not

been able to put my finger on it — who sings :

> " When we 've been there ten thousand years,
> Bright shining as the sun,
> We 've no less days to sing God's praise
> Than when we first begun."

Now, can you imagine yourself happy, singing God's praise every day for ten thousand years? Can you imagine God willing to put up with it? Of course, it is all figurative. I am simply using these illustrations to show how difficult it is, except in general terms, to describe the heaven that even we desire.

I remember very well, painfully well, when I was a little boy, hearing the choir singing sometimes—perhaps for the last hymn, when I had been so tired for twenty minutes that it seemed almost impossible for me to keep still any longer—the old hymn that closed with

> " Where congregations ne'er break up
> And Sabbaths have no end."

Now, I suppose that must have been expressive of a state of mind into which somebody worked himself when he wrote that hymn, to make it mean something to him ; but is it anything that makes us want to go to heaven?

It seems to me that there must be a reform

in our thoughts about heaven in the direction of making it sweet and real and human. There ought to be, for example, what? A perfect memory. Have any of you ever done or said a thing which you would like to forget? I have not. In saying that, I make no claim to goodness. I have said things, I have done things, that I have cried my heart out over; but they are a part of me, and I do not want to forget them. I want them, so that I can know that it is I. I want them as a background for other things. I want no heaven, in other words, that does not carry with it a memory that constitutes a personal consciousness. I want to be myself.

People write to me, and say that they try to be content with the thought that they are going, somehow or other, to enter into the general good of the future, but do not expect a continuance of their personal consciousness. I am perfectly willing that what is left of me shall go into the general good, if that is the way of it; but, if I am not consciously to be there, why, of course, it will mean absolutely nothing to me. I have no personal interest in it.

I believe the heaven, then, that will satisfy us must have this personal consciousness of

identity. I want to remember everything, from the dawn of my being up to the present time, and carry it with me, so that it can be I who am doing, seeing, feeling—am a part of all new experiences always.

Then, of course, that carries with it what has been discussed no end of times,— the question of recognition of friends in heaven. Heaven would be no place for me if I could not look forward to that. I would not turn my hand over to have it if it did not carry that as its most precious hope. If I am not going to see the brothers, father and mother,—all those I have loved so tenderly and who have made up the dearest and sweetest part of my existence,—if I am not going to see them there, then it would be exile, and not home, and where, if I could have my choice, I would not care to go.

Then there is another thing. I said a moment ago it must be made more human. I have studied Swedenborg's heavens. I have studied Dante's, Milton's, the heavens of all the old writers, the heavens of the modern preachers, so far as they have gone into descriptions of them; and they simply have not appealed to me. Why? Because they have not been human. They have not furnished

scope and room for what we are and can do when at our best.

And it is curious, and it is strange, and more curious and more strange that the people who hinder the coming of a little more light do not see it, and do not see that they are doing what has been done ten thousand times before,— it is curious, I say, to see how people will stand in the way of a little more sensible human thought in some of these directions.

When Elizabeth Stuart Phelps wrote her "Gates Ajar," what did she do it for—what was the main point of the book? I care not whether her particular ideas were true or not; but what did she plead for? A typical illustration will show you. A little girl learns to play the piano. She has never had one; she longs for one as the great, crowning achievement and glory of her life; and she asks Miss Phelps whether she believes that she will have a piano in heaven. What did Miss Phelps say to her? She tells her frankly that she thinks she will; and all over this country, and all over Europe, there rose a cry of protest. What for? Because up to that time the only instruments that had been introduced into heaven, apparently, were harps.

Now a harp, for anything I can see, is just

as material, if that was the trouble, as a piano. But this little girl did not want a harp, she did not understand a harp, she did not know how to play on a harp; it would have been no heaven to her to give her a harp. And Miss Phelps keenly saw, whether she was telling her the literal truth or not, that she was telling her the divinest and deepest truth of all when she told her that the supremest longing of her soul would be met and satisfied.

But every step of religious progress has had to meet this sort of stupid, thoughtless, pure prejudice. As has already been said, a piano is not a whit more material than a harp; but it was all right to talk about harps, and heresy to say anything about a piano! Now, this is what we must get over. Most of the heavens of the past are furnished as occupation with only the things that a very few people desire. You see in the pictures of them harps always, people with golden crowns standing before the throne, taking them off their heads and flinging them at the feet of Jesus or of God, and singing and chanting His glory. And you think, from these statements and pictures, and the art that has been lavished on these things in every direction, that this is about all there is to heaven.

Now, while everybody, I suppose, has some small capacity for learning something about music, there are a thousand other things that they care for a great deal more. Is there going to be nothing for anybody but the musicians to do in heaven? What would George Stephenson do in heaven? What would Michael Angelo do in heaven? What will the great mathematicians do in heaven? What will the great discoverers do in heaven? What will the great philanthropists do in heaven? For, according to the popular idea of heaven, all field for philanthropy is done away with. You are going to be glad when you see people in trouble, instead of being sorry for them. Consequently there is going to be no field for effort to get them out of their trouble. That is the teaching of most of the theologies.

So most of the pictures of the old-time heavens do not satisfy the demand for the broadening, deepening, heightening life and dream and hope of the human race. I believe that heaven will find free room and scope for all that is best and noblest in us, and that not a man, not a woman, who has contributed to the sweetness, the happiness, the beauty, the glory, the health, the uplifting of human life in this world, but will find ample scope and room for a thou-

sand times grander contribution to the growth and development of the universe over there.

For, finally, the idea that death puts an end to all growth—the idea in which I was trained, that you are, a moment after death, either a devil or pure angel, that that is the end of it,—lives no more. So there stretches out before us an illimitable career, in which there is field for all that one can dream or think or accomplish.

Our discussion, so far, leaves us only on the threshold of a theme which, under another form and name, will constitute the main theme of the next chapter.

XIII

THE RESURRECTION LIFE

As an indication of the changed tone of the modern world in dealing with the great themes of future good and ill, I wish to tell a brief story of our loved poet Whittier, and let you read one of the poems which makes that story so significant.

Whittier was born an orthodox Quaker; he died a Quaker, but not an orthodox one. He was full at the last of the freedom of thought and life which has made this age so different from the preceding. He wrote a poem after he had begun to be less orthodox, — that is, in the olden time, — and it is that poem which will illustrate the change which was coming over the world. The title of it is "The Two Angels":

"God called the nearest angels who dwell with Him above:
The tenderest one was Pity, the dearest one was Love.

"'Arise,' He said, 'my angels! a wail of woe and sin
Steals through the gates of heaven, and saddens all within.

"'My harps take up the mournful strain that from a lost world swells,
The smoke of torment clouds the light and blights the asphodels.

"'Fly downward to that underworld, and on its souls of pain
Let Love drop smiles like sunshine, and Pity tears like rain!'

"Two faces bowed before the Throne, veiled in their golden hair;
Four white wings lessened swiftly down the dark abyss of air.

"The way was strange, the flight was long; at last the angels came
Where swung the lost and nether world, red-wrapped in rayless flame.

"There Pity, shuddering, wept; but Love, with faith too strong for fear,
Took heart from God's almightiness and smiled a smile of cheer.

"And, lo! that tear of Pity quenched the flame whereon it fell,
And, with the sunshine of that smile, hope entered into hell!

"Two unveiled faces full of joy looked upward to the Throne,

Four white wings folded at the feet of Him who sat thereon !

"And deeper than the sound of seas, more soft than falling flake,
Amidst the hush of wing and song the Voice Eternal spake :

"'Welcome, my angels ! ye have brought a holier joy to heaven ;
Henceforth its sweetest song shall be, the song of sin forgiven !'"

The result of that poem was an acrimonious and critical attack upon Whittier by his orthodox Quaker friends. They said he was losing the faith. And here is the point you need to note : Whittier's reply was, in my opinion, the grandest religious lyric that has ever been written since this world began,— "The Eternal Goodness." Read it, remembering that it is a reply to a criticism on "The Two Angels."

I have started with this reference to Whittier's poem as a general introduction to the change of conception that is passing over the modern world in our way of looking at the possibility and prospect of another life,— whether that life is to be good for us or whether there is to be a great deal of evil connected with it.

This chapter is to deal with the Resurrection Life. I naturally need to begin by asking what we mean by the resurrection, for the word to-day generally signifies something very different from what was at first meant in the early Church. As I have had occasion to tell my readers before, the people at the time of Jesus believed that all souls went down to a cavernous, underground world. They came to believe that it was divided into two parts, good and evil; but nobody went to heaven, in the ordinary meaning of those words to-day. All went down to this underground world.

And the question of the resurrection was that of their coming back from the underworld, rising again after going down—that was the significance of the problem of the resurrection. So that those who believed in the resurrection of Christ were not necessarily those that believed that his body had come out of the tomb of Joseph. They were those who believed that the Christ was still alive, and that he was no longer a prisoner in the underworld, but had come out of it, conquered it, and become the first-fruits of them that had slept. This is what the resurrection essentially meant. As to whether the body was coming up, that was another matter.

What was it that was to be raised? If they were coming up out of this underworld, what was coming? It is a very curious thing to me that people have been fighting for the resurrection of the body for hundreds of years, and have made it a cardinal doctrine in the Church. I was written to by a clergyman not long ago, who told me that no man had a right to be a minister in his church unless he believed in this doctrine. I am astonished that these people forget that Saint Paul himself denies it. He says it is not that body which was buried, but the soul, clothed as God pleases, which is going to rise. Flatly, in so many words, he says it.

What is it that is to come out of this underworld? What is it that is to rise again? I am speaking as if I held the doctrine of the early time, of going down to an underworld; but our conception of the other life has undergone a tremendous change. We no longer believe that anyone goes down into an underworld. We believe that the resurrection, so far as there is anything that deserves that name, is immediately after the fact of death. After a little unconsciousness or sleep, prolonged five minutes in some cases,— an hour, a week, a few months, possibly, in other cases,—

there is rousing to consciousness in the other world. That is what we believe in to-day.

And that raises another old-time question as to whether there is anything in the nature of things or any evidence anywhere that should lead us to believe in another doctrine which has played so large a part in the history of the Church; that is, the doctrine of the intermediate state—the intermediate place. I used to hear the doctrine talked over as a vital question. Edward H. Bickersteth, a once famous poet who wrote an epic, and once thought a great one, the title of it being "Yesterday, To-day, and Forever," taught that there was not only an intermediate state, but an intermediate place, lasting from the time of individual death until the general resurrection.

I remember hearing it discussed, when I was a boy, as to whether people went right straight to hell or to heaven — their souls — while their bodies were in the grave, or whether they slept in the grave and did not wake up until the resurrection, after which they either went to hell or to heaven, whichever place they deserved. It was a vital question then; it is a vital question in many parts of the world to-day. Mr. Spurgeon teaches very definitely his

opinion that the soul goes to heaven or to hell, whichever it has deserved, while the body stays in the grave until the resurrection; but that the soul is not as happy in heaven as it is going to be, or as bad off in hell as it is going to be, until after it is united with the body. He says the body shared the sinful pleasures of those who lived an evil life or the sufferings and persecutions of the good, and so it is fair that the body should share with the soul its reward or punishment.

Perhaps I need hardly say that I believe we wake into consciousness; it is not going down and coming up—it is simply going on; and we go on what we are. Let it be understood, however, lest I should seem too dogmatic if I appear very earnest, that I am not writing as if I had authority. I am only stating the results of the study of a good many years; the reader must take it for what it is worth, having considered the amount of evidence I may be able to bring.

I believe, then, that we go on just what we make ourselves by our lives here. That which finds itself in the resurrection life, as it is popularly called, will be the real, the essential man, — not, necessarily, what hundreds thought of him; not, necessarily, what he was

estimated to be on Wall street; not, thank God, what his bitter enemies thought of him; not what his wife and children thought of him, necessarily. He will be what he became while here. He will be himself who will wake up in the clearer light of that other life. If you ask liberals sometimes whether they hold any severe doctrine, I ask you to question with yourselves a quiet five minutes as to whether there can be anything worse,— except perpetual pain—, when you are bad, than that you be stripped and be seen as you are. This is the kind of life, I suppose, that we go into.

But there are one or two subtle questions more. As I rouse myself in that other life, am I in a place or a state? There is a great deal of metaphysical thought at the present time about spiritual states being everything. Of course, essentially, that of which heaven consists is a state; but it is not a bit truer there than it is here. That which makes you happy now is a state of consciousness, not the particular place you are in. Rich men know well enough that being in a finely furnished house does not insure happiness, that being able to buy anything they lay their eyes on is not quite all that they care for in this world. And poor people have found out very

frequently that living in narrow quarters, ill furnished, with no great amount of light and air, has not been able to keep out heaven, because they carried it with them ; and wherever they were, that was.

Of course, the essential thing over there will be a state, and not a place. But does that mean that you are to be nowhere in particular? A word about this matter of time and space. I have tried, but, I confess in some humiliation, I have tried in vain to find out what a great many philosophers are talking about in this connection. Even Mr. Swedenborg himself will tell us that there are no such things as time or space in the spirit-world. That may mean something to somebody ; but it means nothing to me.

For example, suppose I have two thoughts. Unless you are more brilliant than I am, as I get those two thoughts clearly outlined and distinct from each other, one of them must precede the other. I do not have them at the identical instant. And if I meet a friend over there, if there are two of us, I do not know any laws of physics—or metaphysics, either—by which the two of us can occupy identically the same space. So it seems to me a waste of words—you must take my opin-

ion for what it is worth—to be discussing thus about time and space.

But have we bodies? We leave these bodies behind us; have we bodies over there? I am showing you my limitations; but I cannot think of an individual entity or consciousness of personality unembodied, without form, that occupies no space. A thing that is unembodied, a thing that has no shape, and that occupies no space, to the best of my thinking, is nothing. So I believe that in the resurrection life all are embodied as really as they are now. I do not always know what people are talking about when they say, "Are we really to have bodies over there?" If they mean as substantially, as intensely, as now, I believe they are more real. What we mean by the ether, what we mean by electricity, by no end of invisible and intangible forces, is something much more intensely real, if there are degrees of reality, than my hand or the clothes I wear.

I am inclined to the view that we are to wear what we may call a psychical body, imitating Paul in that. Within us now there may be another body that grows with our growth,—that is the clothing of our invisible self,—which leaves this body when it gets through with it,

which process is what we call death. This psychical body goes out more intensely real than the one it has got through with. This is the kind of body with which we appear in the resurrection life.

I think we are to have some sort of clothing, some kind of houses, some sort of environment—physical environment. There might be, fifteen miles away from us, right here in space, the most magnificent world in existence, grander and finer than this, and peopled with the happiest creatures that live in all the universe, and we know nothing whatever of its existence through the agency of our present senses.

I do not know but we may be put into a world where what we mean now by clothing and houses and ordinary space surroundings may be uncalled for; but at present I do not understand what it means, and I must think according to what seems real to me. I believe there is at least something as good as these things, and, if we cannot know just what they are, that we have a right to comfort ourselves by thinking of them under these terms.

Now is there a world like this—one of mountains, trees and rivers? I incline to think so; I do not know. That seems as reasonable

to me and more natural than anything else I can conceive; but I believe that, whatever shall be true in that direction, when we wake up, it will be with a cry of joy,—not that we are disappointed, but that it is something better even than we were able to anticipate.

Is that life stationary or progressive? Here we come to some deeper questions. Is that life stationary or progressive? Dante—and this is a tradition in the Church, not only the Catholic, but the Anglican as well, and in some of the Protestant—teaches us that the Beatific Vision is the acme of all conceivable bliss, to which nothing can be added, and, when we have reached that, we are through,—or, rather, in the contemplation of this beatific vision we shall never get through or get enough of it to be satisfied. But Dante tells us that he cannot describe it; which is evident, because nobody has ever been able to tell what he meant by it.

This idea does not satisfy me. I am inclined to think that, instead of reaching at once a beatific vision which is to fill the soul through all eternity, we enter upon a life of infinite progression. And here comes a question which I can only touch upon. If we are to progress in the other world, is it necessary that we

should be reincarnated over and over again, and come back here and go through many earthly experiences? There are a great many wise people telling us at the present time that it is necessary for us to live every conceivable kind of life here, and go through every conceivable experience, from the prince to the pauper, from the saint to the wildest and worst sinner. I will stop long enough simply to say that I do not see why. When somebody gives me a reason for that opinion, I will try to understand it.

There is another thing that the believers in reincarnation are accustomed to say to us,—that we must have it to explain the injustice of the world. To me it does not explain the injustice of the world; it only pushes it back out of sight. If it was sin in the life before this one which led to the suffering I am going through in this, what led to the suffering I went through in the last? They tell us it was the sin in the one that preceded that, and so on back; you simply keep on pushing it back through countless millions of years, and never get anywhere. They say all the evils are to be explained by what happened in the life preceding; but, if you keep pushing back life after life, you have got to get to the end of it sometime, and then

you have the same problem facing you as you have now. Either we were always just alike, if we have been living forever, or else we were always different, or else we were made alike in the first place, and given different environments which caused the differences in us. In either case, God is ultimately responsible for all the diversities and differences of character; so that this does not explain things any more than if you take a puzzle which I do not understand and hide it behind a curtain. When I go behind the curtain it is still there, and I do not understand it any better, and a million curtains would make no difference. It would be the same thing when you came to the last one: it would be the same old puzzle. If it were proved to me to be true, of course no objection would make it untrue; but still it would not be desirable to me.

Suppose the person that I love best in all the world should die, and I live on for twenty-five years. By the time I got there that person might be reincarnated. Instead of looking forward to meet her, I should have to be waiting for her. By the time she got back I might be reincarnated. For anything I can see, we might be missing each other in this way for several millions of years. It seems to me a hopeless kind

of doctrine any way you take it; and the curious fact is—and this, I confess, does puzzle me beyond expression—that all the Hindus, all the Buddhists, twice over as many people as there are Christians on the face of the earth, are engaged with their utmost power—all their philosophies, all their religions, exist to the one end—in trying to get rid of being reincarnated; while here we are picking it up as though it were a new find, and something very delightful. The one object of all their religions is to escape it. Before we take it up too readily, I think it would be worth while to find out why they are working so hard to get rid of it.

So this does not give me any hope as I look forward to the other life.

But now comes another question that people are perpetually asking. They say, after the belief is expressed that there is not going to be any permanent hell, "Well, how are the good and evil to be mixed up together, and there be any heaven at all?" Might one not ask just as well, How can there be any happiness in New York with the good and evil mixed up in it? We do not associate with evil here unless we wish to: we are not compelled to associate with bad people. People go their own way according to their own wishes and desires, and

so it seems to me they would if they were not fenced apart by themselves in the resurrection life.

There is another point, one of the most important of all: If we were to be shut off in heaven by ourselves, never to come in contact with suffering or evil of any kind, or if, according to the teachings of Edwards and Hopkins and many of the modern authorities in England and America, we are to be so changed that looking down over the battlements of heaven and seeing the damned in hell would only add to our joy, why, then there is going to be quite a serious change in our nature. Pity and love and sympathy and the impulse to help, the very motive force that made Christ what he was, —that which, we are told, is the divinest in the very heart of God,—all that is going to be blotted out. We are going to be different kinds of creatures from what has been supposed.

If there is to be progress and a full life led on the part of those who go into the other condition of existence, then there must be opportunity for us to come into contact with each other. There must be room for pity, for sympathy, and help; and that means that there must be hope, however far away, for the lowest and the poorest and the meanest of all.

Unless there is hope in that other world, then the finest and grandest things in us are to atrophy and die out after a while, and we are to become the very concentration of selfishness and self-indulgence, though it be in nectar and the sweetest things the poets have sung about. There must be field there for all that makes us men; and it is these things that have more to do in making us men than anything else that we can conceive.

There is one other problem, you will notice, among the many that are thrust upon us by people who come wishing to know how this or that or another thing is to be regarded rationally in connection with the resurrection life. This is the question of the possible disentanglement of human relationships here in this world. Everybody knows that there are men, without any fault of theirs, so tied by law and custom and honor to the places and associations where they are that they never have a sense of rest and peace and joy day or night their whole lives long. We know perfectly well that there are women of whom a similar thing is true. There are children who never have a chance, as they say. There are people bound together here by all sorts of external and conventional bonds.

Now I do not know whether I shall shock anyone by the opinion I hold. Unfortunately, perhaps, for me, I have never asked the question, before saying a thing, as to whether anybody is going to be troubled by it or not, if it seemed true and needed to be said. Do we not know that there are in this city of New York and in any place in the world many cases of people who are bound together in this life by bonds purely and only superficial, that are matters of convention, that are matters of law, perhaps, who, if they were freed, would fly apart to the world's ends? There were two people, once friends. One of them lived here in the United States, and the other lived on the Eastern Continent for a great many years; and someone who did not know them asked why they lived so far apart; and the answer was that the world was not big enough so that they could get any farther apart.

This hints an instinct that many would follow if they were free; and in no end of times the desire to be free is no crime and no wrong. It is simply a desire to repair a blunder that somebody has made, perhaps not themselves. There are daughters married by their fathers and mothers for the sake of extending the power of the family. There are husbands

induced to marry this one or that for the sake of binding together two estates or reaching a certain social position. Do bonds like these last in the other world? I trust not.

Let us hope that things will readjust themselves there until the bonds that bind people together are of the soul—are real, not shams. Let us trust it is to be a world of justice and of reality.

Will there be perfect happiness, perfect bliss, in that other world? Perhaps I shall shock someone again, as I do not expect it at all in my own case. This old idea that the minute you died you were either going to hell, to be as miserable as possible and continue to exist, or going to heaven, to be as happy as you could be and continue to exist, both seem to me utterly absurd. I expect to go into the other world what I am now. Suppose I should die now, in five minutes. I do not believe there is anything in the fact of dying that would make me a different man from what I am. I expect to carry over into that world the accumulations and experiences of my lifetime.

There are thousands of us who need to take sound and careful heed to the fact that we are training ourselves in a hundred things that

will be of no avail when we get there, and we are neglecting the culture and training of those things that may be most important when in that day; and those things alone will mean misery or happiness without any regard to an outside inflicter or jailer who is glad to have it so. It is in the nature of things.

I do not expect to be perfectly happy. If I find a friend over there who has not outgrown his meanness and selfishness and a thousand bad traits which he cultivated here, and is in the dark, struggling to get rid of himself, I should be a brute to be perfectly happy and not turn to him in sympathy and help him out of it if I could. I think I should not worry over the question of being serenely blessed so long as I find people of that kind to be helped. It seems to me that this expecting that we are going to have perfect bliss over there is the concentrated essence of selfishness. I do not know how it is any worse to want to be happy here than to want to be happy and nothing else in heaven.

I want to be free from pain just this minute. I do not know that there is any evil in it. I do not want to suffer any unnecessary pain in heaven. I do not think there is any evil in that, either. But if there is someone I can

help, and if seeing his struggles and difficulties makes me sad for the time, I will count that sadness a fairer and whiter crown than any that has been painted in the Revelation of Saint John the Divine.

Let us trust that we shall be growing in that land. I hope there will be the sense of struggle for us. I do not know what others can imagine ; but I cannot imagine that life is going to mean anything where there is no effort and where there is no sense of conquering, of victory after a struggle. And if there is effort there must be a little question as to success, or the effort would be a sham.

Oh, let us think these things through, and let our thoughts be natural and human. Let us not fancy that we must make heaven something utterly unnatural in order to make it good and divine !

Why should there not be a good many sources of disquiet and discomfort for a while over there ? But if life is something grand, and there is hope for everybody, and you know that, no matter how low a man may be, there is an angel in him, and you can help get him out, if there is something grand to study, — then there may be happiness unspeakably finer and nobler than that senseless and in-

sipid thing that has been painted so often of someone sitting on a cloud and doing nothing except play a harp or hear someone else play.

There must be wide open field for the operation and development of all that we are. The astronomer shall still have heavens to study. He who is overwhelmed, as I have always been, by the infinitely little, shall have an opportunity to look into the secrets of the universe. Why may not the poet write grander epics and dramas and lyrics than he ever wrote here; why may not the historian have grander themes to engage his pen; why may not the orater have audiences still to listen and applaud; why may not the painter and the sculptor be able to outline and shape the images of beauty which they see in the outside world or that they dream in the innerworld of their thought?

These, it seems to me, are some of the things that open to us. Let us dare to believe that the occupations over there shall be just as natural and human as they are here; and we shall have gotten over the absurdity of supposing that studying God's truth in the universe is secular, and studying what the same God has done in some other department that we are accustomed to fence off and call "church

life" is sacred. All study of God is sacred. We shall learn that by and by, and rejoice in the fact.

A letter recently came to me, a few lines of which I wish you to share with me. It is the dream of a friend as to what he hopes to find in the other country:

"I hope to find a quiet place in the rural districts of the Hereafter—one of these days. I want a river, not too big, — a brook, — some woods, grand hills, a garden where I can raise the stuff to make ambrosia, and fruits from which to distil nectar, and — several other things. I want to have father and mother and Wilbur and Wesley and John and all the rest within easy calling distance; and some plain, useful work to do."

That is one of the most rational dreams and hopes of a future life that I have ever had the pleasure to read; for it hints the divinest thing after all,—that what we want is what we waked up in when we came into this world. We want home: no matter what we study, we want home; no matter how far we travel, we want home; no matter how many we go out to help, to teach, to inspire, to lift up, we want a home to which to go back.

When we think of heaven, is it not home that we are thinking of more than anything else? My friend near me this morning is

thinking of the wife that came to this country with him, and fought it out with him,—a helpmate to the last. And no other thousand beautiful women could make any heaven for him if she were not there. And he wants the daughter whose early beauty went out of his life and left it so desolate; he wants the old father and mother; and he would look for many a good old neighbour.

I want, if I could have my way, instead of that which my friend has written and I have quoted, a great city. I love the country for a while. I like to go to it and look at it. But the city has my heart. I would rather live in the city the whole year round than to live in the country the whole year round, if I could only have one choice. I want the crowds—the lift, the thrill of life, the sidewalks, streets,—all that make up its rush and its roar. I would like a city with country near and accessible. I should want the country near enough, so that I could go and see my friends who will live in the country. I should want the heart-home, the one I love most, close by. I want that, and, for a while,—rest.

I have heard people talk of heaven as though they were going to rest forever. Would n't that come to be the most tiresome thing of all

after a while? Why should we not think of it as natural enough, so that there might be turning off from one particular thing to another, as meeting the demands of the heart? Why should we not think of it, finally, as a human, active life, and a life that can go on forever? For—did you never think of it?—it is because God is infinite, and because there are these ten thousands of questions we cannot answer about it,—it is because of this mystery that enshrouds everything that we can have a rational dream of an eternal life.

The people who are not disposed to trust in God because they cannot see the meaning of everything each minute want to read their own death-warrants. It is because of the eternal mystery that we can still advance and have something eternally before us to seek and strive after. It is this eternal activity, with home in the background, that makes the essence of our dream of the resurrection life.

APPENDIX

SOME ANCIENT AND MODERN THINGS SAID ABOUT HELL*

A HINDU poet says, "The ungrateful shall remain in hell as long as the sun hangs in heaven."

Hindu and Persian sacred books:

"Here worlds of nauseating disgusts, of loathsome agonies, of intolerable terrors, pass before us. Some are hung up by their tongues or by their eyes, and slowly devoured by fiery vermin; some scourged with whips of serpents whose poisonous fangsl acerate their flesh at every blow; some forced to swallow bowls of gore, hair, and corruption, freshly filled as fast as drained; some packed immovably in red-hot iron chests, and laid in raging furnaces for unutterable millions of ages."

The Parsee priest describes a woman in hell "beaten with stone clubs by two demons twelve miles in size, and compelled to continue eating a basin of putridity because once some of her hair, as she combed it, fell into the sacred fire."

The Brahmanic priest tells of a man who, for

* See Chapter xi.

"neglecting to meditate on the mystic monosyllable 'Om' before praying, was thrown down in hell on an iron floor and cleaved with an axe, then stirred in a cauldron of molten lead till covered all over with the sweated foam of torture, like a grain of rice in an oven, and then fastened, with head downwards and feet upwards, to a chariot of fire, and urged onward with a red-hot goad."

A Talmudic writer says:

"There are in hell seven abodes, in each abode seven thousand caverns, in each cavern seven thousand clefts, in each cleft seven thousand scorpions. Each scorpion has seven limbs, and on each limb are seven thousand barrels of gall. There are also in hell seven rivers of rankest poison, so deadly that, if one touches it, he bursts."

Tertullian:

"At that greatest of all spectacles, the last and eternal judgment," he says, "how shall I admire, how laugh, how rejoice, how exult, when I behold so many proud monarchs groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness; so many magistrates liquefying in fiercer flames than they ever kindled against the Christians; so many sage philosophers blushing in red-hot fires, with their deluded pupils; so many tragedians more tuneful in the expression of their own sufferings; so many dancers tripping more nimbly from anguish than ever before from applause!"

Burnet has preserved the plea of bloody Mary:—

"As the souls of heretics are hereafter to be eternally burning in hell, there can be nothing more proper than for me to imitate the divine vengeance by burning them on earth."

Jeremy Taylor says:

"We are amazed at the inhumanity of Phalaris, who roasted men in his brazen bull: this was joy in respect of that fire of hell which penetrates the very entrails without consuming them." "Husbands shall see their wives, parents shall see their children, tormented before their eyes." "The bodies of the damned shall be crowded together in hell like grapes in a wine-press, which press one another till they burst." "Every distinct sense and organ shall be assailed with its own appropriate and most exquisite sufferings."

Jonathan Edwards:

"The world will probably be converted into a great lake or liquid globe of fire,—a vast ocean of fire, in which the wicked shall be overwhelmed, which will always be in tempest, in which they shall be tossed to and fro, having no rest day or night, vast waves or billows of fire continually rolling over their heads, of which they shall forever be full of a quick sense within and without. Their heads, their eyes, their tongues, their hands, their feet, their loins, and their vitals shall forever be full of a glowing, melting fire, fierce enough to melt the very rocks and elements; and also they shall eternally be full of the most quick and lively sense to feel the

torments, not for one minute, nor for one day, nor for one age, nor for two ages, nor for a hundred years, nor for ten thousands of millions of ages, one after another, but forever and ever, without any end at all, and never, never be delivered."

Joseph Trapp, an English clergyman :

"Doomed to live death, and never to expire,
In floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire
The damn'd shall groan,—fire of all kinds and forms,
In rain and hail, in hurricanes and storms,
Liquid and solid, livid, red and pale,
A flaming mountain here, and there a flaming vale.
The liquid fire makes seas ; the solid, shores.
Arch'd o'er with flames, the horrid concave roars.
In bubbling eddies rolls the fiery tide,
And sulphurous surges on each other ride.
The hollow winding vaults, and dens, and caves
Bellow like furnaces with flaming waves.
Pillars of flame in spiral volumes rise,
Like fiery snakes, and lick the infernal skies.
Sulphur, the eternal fuel, unconsumed,
Vomits rebounding smoke, thick, unillumed."

The Bishop of Toronto :

"Every child of humanity, except the Virgin Mary, is from the moment of conception a child of wrath, hated by the blessed Trinity, belonging to Satan, and doomed to hell."

In Wigglesworth's "Day of Doom" are these verses addressed to infants :

"You sinners are, and such a share
As sinners may expect,

Such you shall have ; for I do save
None but my own elect.
Yet, to compare your sin with their
Who lived a longer time,
I do confess yours is much less,
Though every sin's a crime.

"'A crime it is, therefore in bliss
You may not hope to dwell ;
But unto you I shall allow
The easiest room in hell.'
The glorious King thus answering,
They cease and plead no longer.
Their consciences must needs confess
His reasons are the stronger."

The New School Presbyterians, in the so-called Auburn Declaration, adopted the following article :

"While repentance for sin and faith in Christ are indispensable to salvation, all who are saved are indebted, from first to last, to the grace and Spirit of God. And the reason that God does not save all is not that He wants the *power* to do it, but that in His wisdom He does not see *fit to exert that power further than He actually does.*"

Hopkins :

"The smoke of their torment shall ascend up in the sight of the blessed forever and ever, and serve as a most clear glass always before their eyes, to give them a bright and most affecting view. This display of the divine character will be most entertaining to all who love God, will give them the highest and

most ineffable pleasure. Should the fire of this eternal punishment cease, it would in a great measure obscure the light of heaven, and put an end to a great part of the happiness and glory of the blessed."

Dr. Duryee:

"When the Christian finds out at last who are in the regions of despair and what they are there meeting, *we are very sure he will neither be affected by the number nor by the duration of their punishment.*"

Jonathan Edwards:

"When they shall see you turned away and beginning to enter into the great furnace, and shall see how you shrink at it, and hear how you shriek and cry out, yet they will not be at all grieved for you; but at the same time, you will hear from them renewed praises and hallelujahs for the true and righteous judgments of God in so dealing with you."

Testimony of Dr. Momerie, London *Inquirer* (he himself heard a clergyman deliver this from his pulpit):

"My brethren, you may imagine that, when you look down from heaven and see your acquaintances and friends and relatives in hell, your happiness will be somewhat marred. But no! You will then be so purified and perfected that, as you gaze on that sea of suffering, it will only increase your joy."

A friend of mine heard a Baptist preacher in a great New-England city the past winter teach the

probability of *God's shutting up some souls in hell in solitary confinement forever*. Some Bible text was twisted into this meaning.

Rev. Gardiner Spring, New York, 1834, from a sermon on missions:

"His bosom is torn and distracted with anguish. His lips quiver with agony, and he draws his last gasp of despair. And, oh that it were one solitary pagan only! But think of *twenty-five millions* of your fellow-men every year sinking in such a death; and then look into that deep abyss where millions after millions of years roll on, and the miserable sufferers encounter new dangers, new fears, new scenes of anguish without any prospect of termination, and what emotions of grief, abasement, and horror may smite our bosoms! 'We are verily guilty concerning our brother.'"

An American missionary, after his return from China, said:

"Fifty thousand a day go down to the fire that is not quenched. Six hundred millions more are going the same road. Should you not think, at least once a day, of the fifty thousand who that day sink to the doom of the lost?"

The American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions says:

"To send the Gospel to the heathen is a work of great exigency. Within the last thirty years a whole generation of five hundred millions have gone down to eternal death."

Again, the same Board say in their tract, "The Grand Motive to Missionary Effort":

"The heathen are involved in the ruins of apostasy, and are expressly doomed to perdition. Six hundred millions of deathless souls on the brink of hell! What a spectacle!"

Rev. Dr. Cleaveland, New Haven, 1863:

"Glorious things have been achieved, it is true. But, after all, there are six hundred millions still groping in the shadow of death, and *perishing, twenty millions a year!*"

Rev. William Davidson, Xenia:

"And this shall last forever. It shall never, never end. (Matt. xxv.) The wicked go away into everlasting torments. This is a bitter ingredient in their cup of wormwood,—a more terrible thing in their terrible doom. If, after enduring it all for twice ten thousand times ten thousand years, they might have a deliverance,—or, at least, some abatement,—it were less terrible. But this may never, never be. Their estate is remediless. There is a great gulf fixed, and they cannot pass from thence. Or if, after suffering all this for as many years as there are aqueous particles in air and ocean, they might then be delivered; or if, after repeating that amazing period as many times as there are sand-grains in the globe, they might then be delivered,—there would be *some* hope. Or, if you multiply this latter sum—too infinite to be expressed by figures, and too limitless to be comprehended by angels—by the number of atoms that

compose the universe, and there might be deliverance when they had passed those amazing, abysmal gulfs of duration, then there would be *some* hope. But no. When all is suffered and all is past, still all beyond is eternity."

From a Roman Catholic book, published "for children," Rev. J. Furniss:

"The fourth dungeon is 'the boiling kettle.' Listen: there is a sound like that of a kettle boiling. Is it really a kettle which is boiling? No. Then what is it? Hear what it is. The blood is boiling in the scalded veins of that boy; the brain is boiling and bubbling in his head; the marrow is boiling in his bones. The fifth dungeon is the 'red-hot oven,' in which is *a little child.* Hear how it screams to come out; see how it turns and twists itself about in the fire; it beats its head against the roof of the oven. It stamps its little feet on the floor of the oven. To this child God was very good. Very likely God saw that this child would get worse and worse, and would never repent; and so it would have to be punished *much more* in hell. *So God in his mercy called it out of the world in its early childhood.*"

Spurgeon says:

"First, notice they are to be *cast out.* They are not said to *go*; but, when they come to heaven's gates, they are said to be *cast out.* As soon as hypocrites arrive at the gates of heaven, justice will say: 'There he comes! there he comes! He spurned a father's prayers and mocked a mother's tears. He

has forced his way downward against all the advantages mercy has supplied. And now there he comes. Gabriel, take the man.' The angel, binding you hand and foot, holds you one single moment over the mouth of the chasm. He bids you look down —down—down. There is no bottom ; and you hear coming up from the abyss sullen moans and hollow groans and screams of tortured ghosts. You quiver, your bones melt like wax, and your marrow quakes within you. Where is now thy might, and where thy boasting and bragging? Ye shriek and cry, ye beg for mercy ; but the angel, with one tremendous grasp, seizes you fast, and then hurls you down with the cry, 'Away, away!' And down you go to the pit that is bottomless, and roll forever downward—downward—downward—ne'er to find a resting-place for the soles of your feet. Ye shall be cast out.

"*And where are you to be cast to?* Ye are to be cast 'into outer darkness'; ye are to be put in the place where there will be no hope. For, by the 'light,' in Scripture, we understand 'hope'; and you are to be put 'into outer darkness,' where there is no light, no hope. Is there a man who has no hope? I cannot suppose such a person. One of you, perhaps, says, 'I am thirty pounds in debt, and shall be sold up by and by ; but I have a hope that I may get a loan, and so escape my difficulty.' Says another, 'My business is ruined, but things may take a turn yet,—I have a hope.' Says another, 'I am in great distress, but I hope that God will provide for me.' Another says, 'I am fifty pounds in debt: I am sorry for it ; but I will set these strong hands to work, and

do my best to get out of it.' One of you thinks a friend is dying; but you have a hope that perhaps, the fever may take a turn, that he may yet live. But in hell there is no hope. They have not even the hope of dying—the hope of being annihilated. They are forever, forever, forever lost! On every chain in hell there is written 'forever.' In the fires there blazes out the word 'forever.' Up above their heads they read 'forever.' Their eyes are galled, and their hearts are pained with the thought that it is 'forever.' Oh, if I could tell you to-night that hell would one day be burned out, and that those who were lost might be saved, there would be a jubilee in hell at the thought of it. But it cannot be: it is '*forever*' they are 'cast into outer darkness.'

"But I want to get over this as quickly as I can; for who can bear to talk thus to his fellow-creatures? What is it that the lost are doing? They are 'weeping and gnashing their teeth.' Do you gnash your teeth now? You would not do it except you were in pain and agony. Well, in hell there is always gnashing of teeth. And do you know why? There is one gnashing his teeth at his companion, and mutters, 'I was led into hell by you. You led me astray. You taught me to drink the first time.' And the other gnashes his teeth, and says: 'What if I did? You made me worse than I should have been in after-times.' There is a child who looks at her mother, and says, 'Mother, you trained me up in vice.' And the mother gnashes her teeth again at the child, and says, 'I have no pity for you; for you excelled me in it, and led me into deeper sin.' Fathers gnash

their teeth at their sons, and sons at their fathers. And, methinks, if there are any who will have to gnash their teeth more than others it will be seducers, when they see those whom they have led from the paths of virtue, and hear them say, 'Ah! we are glad you are in hell with us; you deserve it, for you led us here.'

"Have any of you to-night upon your consciences the fact that you have led others to the pit? Oh, may sovereign grace forgive you! 'We have gone astray like lost sheep,' said David. Now a lost sheep never goes astray alone, if it is one of the flock. I lately read of a sheep that leaped over the parapet of a bridge, and was followed by every one of the flock. So, if one man goes astray, he leads others with him. Some of you will have to account for others' sins when you get to hell, as well as your own. Oh, what 'weeping and gnashing of teeth' there will be in that pit!"

"There is a real fire in hell, as truly as you have now a real body,—a fire exactly like that which we have on earth in everything except this: that it will not consume, though it will torture you. You have seen the asbestos lying in the fire red-hot; but when you take it out, it is unconsumed. So your body will be prepared by God in such a way that it will burn forever without being consumed. It will lie, not as you consider, in metaphorical fire, but in actual flame. Did our Saviour mean fictions when he said that he would cast body and soul into hell? What should there be a pit for if there were no

bodies? Why fire, why chains, if there were to be no bodies? Can fire touch the soul? Can pits shut in spirits? Can chains fetter souls? No; pits and fire and chains are for bodies; and bodies shall be there. Thou wilt sleep in the dust for a little while. When thou diest, thy soul will be tormented alone, —that will be a hell for it,—but at the judgment day thy body will join thy soul; and then thou wilt have twin hells. Body and soul shall be together, each brimful of pain, thy soul sweating in its inmost pore drops of blood, and thy body from head to foot suffused with agony; conscience, judgment, memory, all tortured; but more, thy head tormented with racking pains, thine eyes starting from their sockets with sights of blood and woe, thine ears tormented with

> 'Sullen moans and hollow groans,
> And shrieks of tortured ghosts';

thine heart beating high with fever, thy pulse rattling at an enormous rate in agony, thy limbs cracking like the martyrs in the fire, and yet unburnt; thyself put in a vessel of hot oil, pained, yet coming out undestroyed; all thy veins becoming a road for the hot feet of pain to travel on; every nerve a string on which the devil shall ever play his diabolical tune of Hell's Unutterable Lament; thy soul forever and ever aching, and thy body palpitating in unison with thy soul. Fictions, sir? Again, I say, they are no fictions, and, as God liveth, but solid, stern truth. If God be true, what I have said is the truth; and you will find it one day to be so."

Albert Barnes writes:

"In the distress and anguish of my own spirit, I confess I see not one ray to disclose to me the reason why man should suffer to all eternity. I have never seen a particle of light thrown on these subjects that has given a moment's ease to my tortured mind. It is all dark—dark—dark to my soul; and I cannot disguise it.

"I trust other men—as they profess to do—understand this better than I do, and that they have not the anguish of spirit which I have; but I confess, when I look on a world of sinners and sufferers, upon death-beds and graveyards, upon the world of woe, filled with hosts to suffer forever; when I see my friends, my parents, my family, my people, my fellow-citizens; when I look upon a whole race, all involved in this sin and danger; and when I see the great mass of them wholly unconcerned; and when I feel that God only can save them, and yet He does not do it,—I am struck dumb. It is all *dark*, *dark*, *dark*, to my soul; and I cannot disguise it."

NOTE.—Many of these extracts I owe to Alger's *History of the Doctrine of a Future Life*; others I have myself collected.

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